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## SOME BHACA RELIGIOUS CATEGORIES

W. D. HAMMOND-TOOKE \*

### INTRODUCTION

The following paper attempts to describe some of the main features of religion among the Bhaca, a South Nguni people numbering some 50,000 and inhabiting the district of Mount Frere, East Griqualand.<sup>1</sup> Since 1839, when the first missionaries commenced work in the district, the Bhaca have been under the constant influence of Christianity, and today the great majority are at least professing Christians. This fact has made it difficult to obtain really satisfactory data on indigenous religion, but it is hoped that the following analysis, while perhaps inadequate in describing the entire social reality, will serve to elucidate its main categories and general nature.

It may be pertinent at this stage to tender a few introductory remarks. Bhaca belief, based primarily on the worship of the ancestors, is a religion of primitive type in that the intellectual expression of religious experience (the theoretical field of belief or dogma) is not as highly developed as in more complex types. The Bhaca tribesman has not created a logical, systematized body of beliefs about the nature of existence, the abode of the dead or the relation of man to a creative first principle; it is improbable that he speculates much on these matters. Rather is the complementary side of religious experience, the practical aspect

of ritual (*cultus*) stressed, "theology" being inherent in, and lived through, ritual.

As Wach<sup>2</sup> has pointed out, a minimum theoretical expression is always present in religious activity—a basic motivating force without which ritual loses meaning, and among the Bhaca there is certainly this modicum of theory. It is, however, through the medium of ritual that these often incoherent and vaguely defined beliefs are overtly expressed.

The material will be discussed under the three heads, dogma, ritual and ethics, at the end of which an attempt will be made to assess the sociological role of the ancestor cult in the society generally.

### THE THEORY OF THE ANCESTOR CULT

The key to the understanding of Bhaca religion is the dogma of the ancestral shade (*ithfongo*). All moral and ritual forms stem ultimately from this concept which, in turn, colours emotional attitudes to them and determines their nature. We shall discuss later the correlated ritual and ethical implications of the ancestor cult; here we must examine the nature of the motivating beliefs that play such a large part in Bhaca spiritual life—in accordance with Wach's axiom, "a minimum theoretical expression is always present".<sup>3</sup> We shall not find a highly developed body of beliefs about the

\* Dr Hammond-Tooke, formerly of the Ethnological Section of the Department of Native Affairs, is now Lecturer in Social Anthropology at Rhodes University, Grahamstown.

<sup>1</sup> The information contained in this paper was obtained in 1949 during field investigations financed by the National Council for Social Research. For further details see the author's *Tribes of the Mount Frere District*, Ethnol. Public. No. 33, Dept. of Native Affairs, 1956.

<sup>2</sup> Wach, J., *The Sociology of Religion*, 1947, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> This must not be interpreted in a cause-effect sequence. Dogma and ritual are interdependent and it is indeed possible that belief is a rationalization of ritualized motor activity dramatizing important events in social life.



nature of the soul and after-life, nor a systematized theology. Ideas about the nature of the spirit world are often personal and half-formulated; differences in detail appearing even between people living within a localized area. Differentiation does not appear to be locally or territorially determined but rather on criteria of status, e.g. there tend to be slight differences between the beliefs held by older and younger people, while many church members have developed modified forms of pagan belief within a general Christian dogmatic structure.

The basic religious concept is that of the soul. The Bhaca believe that after the death of an individual an intangible, shadowy substance, which has been there all the time, emerges from the body and continues to exist as a separate entity and personality. Informants appear to be vague as to the exact nature of this 'soul'. Some identify it with the breath (*umphefumlo*), or use the word *umoya* (wind, spirit), to express the idea of the element that co-exists with the material body and is expressed through a man's personality. There is less doubt about the nature of its activities. After death the soul becomes a shade (*ithfongo*)<sup>4</sup>, and, of great sociological importance, it is believed that this spirit takes an intense interest in the activities and well-being of its living descendants. It is this appreciation of and interest in the living members of the society that transforms the vague belief in spirits into a vital and practical cult—the worship of the ancestral dead. In effect, the dead still belong to the community and fall within the field of social relations which is the tribe—but on a different, invisible plane. Despite this difference in quality, relations between the living and the dead are comparatively frequent, occurring particularly in crises in individual and social life.

If Bhaca are asked the question, "Who are the *amathfongo*?" the most usual reply is, "They are the old people (*abantfu abadzala*) who have died"; "The actual *amathfongo* are the people of the *umti* who have

died". The emphasis is on age and, the concept not being refined to any degree, there is some doubt whether people who die young become spirits. Indeed the correlation with age is so close that very old people may be referred to as *amathfongo* even during their lifetime. As one old man stated, "Old people are almost *amathfongo*, and, if one disobeys them or is cheeky and stubborn, they may curse one". Although age is extremely important, much depends on the personality of the deceased. The spirit of a chief or prominent tribesman, even if deceased in his prime, tends to become a much more powerful shade than that of a senile old man. Much depends on the impression of personality left on the minds of the surviving family and clan members. Some informants go so far as to maintain that only married people become *amathfongo* ("You only become an *ithfongo* to your children"); but in general there is not much agreement nor uniformity of belief, and, in the final analysis, much depends on a tribesman's social personality at death. As one informant stated, "Even a child who has died sometimes visits you in a dream and speaks to you—but, in reality, it is sent to you by the old people (shades)".

The idea that only married people become spirits is understandable when it is remembered that ancestor worship is essentially a hearth-cult. The object of family worship is the spirits of the deceased's immediate relatives in the male line, and the majority of *amathfongo* only have power over their own children and grand-children. A man is an *ithfongo* to his own and brother's children, male and female, but not to those of his sister, who come under the influence of the spirits of their father's ancestors. A woman on marriage is influenced by two sets of spirits—those of her father's *umti* (household) and those of her husband's. "If my mother is sick the sickness might be sent from two places; either from her own *umti* or from her husband's place." Spiritual influence is confined to clan members and,

<sup>4</sup> It would seem that the spirit bears a resemblance to the dead man and is recognized in dreams. It is interesting that the root *-ihonga* means "deep sleep"



as children take the clan of their father, a man's grandchildren, children of his daughters, are not affected by his ghost. The principle of primogeniture, as in all Southern Bantu societies, is strongly developed and, as we should expect, a person cannot become an *ithfongo* to another senior to him. Generally only the father's ancestors have power over the children of a marriage, the most notable exception to this rule being the occasional influence exerted by maternal ancestors during the spirit possession of an *isangoma* (pl. *itangoma*) diviner. The belief in shades affects relations even between the living: "If I trouble my elder brother I am inviting misfortune to come to me as he is just like my father" (i.e. he will take the father's place in the *umti* on the latter's death).

Spiritual manifestation to the living is pre-eminently through dreams. One old woman—a Christian of a few years standing—stated, "An *ithfongo* lives in the brain and appears through dreams. It tells a person to do something, and, if he does not do it, it will make him sick." Another: "They come to people through dreams; you sometimes see them when you are asleep and they come and speak to you." Even to the professional religious practitioners, the diviners, the recognized method of communion with the spirit world is through dreams. "They always appear in a peculiar form (*ngendlela engaqhelekanga*), wearing white and telling you what to do." Often they herald their presence by whistling, and it is a grave offence for a spectator to whistle at an *intlombe* (a séance at which the diviners communicate with the spirits) as the *itangoma* might become confused. "Sometimes you do not recognize them, never having seen them before, but when you wake up and describe them to the old people, they will tell you that it was your grandfather or great-uncle." Others sum up with, "They are just like the *itilwana* (familiar possessed by witches)—seldom seen"; "They are like the wind." Some say, however, that voices are sometimes

heard by those awake, usually emanating from above the doorway of a hut, but others maintain that it is only a diviner who can detect the presence of the *amathfongo* in this way. Formerly, if someone in the kraal dreamt of an *ithfongo*, the owner slaughtered a white goat for "the spirits are asking for a killing".

Apart from this the exact location of the spirit world is vague. Diviners speak of meeting spirits in a world "under the river bank" where there are herds and *imiti*, but it seems in general that the concept is undefined, spirits only becoming localized in specific contexts of family propitiation and worship centred round the *umti*. But even here there is doubt about the exact location of the object of worship. During a séance the diviner faces the back of the hut where the entrails of the sacrificial goat are hung, so there appears to be a tendency to associate the back of a hut with the presence.<sup>5</sup>

A further anthropomorphic characteristic of the cult is the belief that the *amathfongo* eat, although even the less sophisticated appear to doubt that the food is actually taken physically. At ritual sacrifices certain parts of the meat ("those parts which people like best") and blood are set aside overnight for the delectation of the spirits. "We think that they eat because we put down meat and milk for them, but eventually it will be eaten by ourselves." "*Amathfongo* live in the kraals. They also eat. Sometimes milk is spilt by mistake and we say that the ancestral shades have come for it. Then if the owner of the *umti* does not give more milk they will spill it again and may send sickness." "We believe that the *amathfongo* have eaten, because we suppose that they have eaten in Heaven (*ezulwini*)."  
"The *amathfongo* live in Heaven. They get hungry but do not eat earthly things. It is like communion when people drink wine and say it is the blood of Jesus." These statements are important as today by far the greater proportion of Bhaca are members of one or other of the many mission churches in the district, and this synthesized

<sup>5</sup> The dried gall bladders of goats (*iinyongo*), worn by diviners, are said to be the dwelling place of the *ithfongo*.



outlook is typical of most. It is realized that the sacrificial meat at an *intlombe* is eaten, not by the spirits, but by the attending diviners themselves.

The importance of the *amathfongo* from a sociological point of view is their interest in the lives and actions of their living descendants. It seems that, on the whole, they are benevolent and propitious towards mortals, but there is always the danger that they might be offended in some way. "If you do not please them they will cause the stock to die." "They tell you what to do through dreams and if you do not obey them they will make you sick." "They should be respected so that they will not get angry and make people and stock ill." Often they appear to be malicious: "If you do not please them they will take the thing you value most", and it is said that parents will never give their children complimentary names for this reason. References to the *amathfongo* are often heard in daily life. If, for instance, a man has been injured, he will say *Ithfongo likabawo lindilahle* (The spirit of my father has forsaken me). We shall notice later the important bearing this ancestral displeasure has on primitive ethics. But, "If the *amathfongo* are pleased with you, they can bring you good fortune (*ithamsanqa*)"; "If a young man is successful with the girl of his choice, he says 'The *amathfongo* love me'." They are the protectors of kin groups, and even sorcerers and witches cannot harm one if they do not permit it. In time of war and at the annual first fruit festival they are present and watch over the interests and welfare of their children.

The *amathfongo* are the gods of the Bhaca. There is no belief in local nature-gods, nor are the culture heroes of the past deified, except as the spirits of dead chiefs, invoked during tribal rites by their descendants. As among most Bantu tribes there is a vague belief in a creator who fashioned all things (*umdzali*); but the indigenous belief has been so over-clouded with Christian con-

cepts that it no longer exists as a separate, identifiable original culture element. The general word used by Christians and pagans alike to translate the word "God" is *uThixo*, and all informants stated that this term had always been used, even before contact with the White Man. Callaway<sup>6</sup> has shown, however, that the word is an introduction into Xhosa from Hottentot of recent date. Today all Bhaca believe in the deity, *uThixo*, and Christians have achieved an interesting synthesis of the two systems. In the words of an evangelist at Mhlotshe: "The *amathfongo* go along with God; they are there to speak to God on our behalf." "When we sacrifice we sacrifice to both God and the spirits. In the Old Testament we read of sacrifices." "They ask permission from God to come to us in dreams." "The *amathfongo* are the spirit of God (*angumoya kaThixo*) because they live in Heaven." I met no church member who was at all embarrassed by any possible incongruity or incompatibility in this juxtaposition of the two forms of belief. There is no system of beliefs, however, other than those of obvious Christian origin, associated with a supreme being, nor any associated ritual. *UTHixo* is a rather vague abstraction and, except among church members, does not impinge to any large extent on the lives of the people.

#### THE OBJECTIFICATION OF DOGMA THROUGH RITUAL

Bhaca religious theory is given cultural and behavioural overt expression through ritual. The beliefs that are internalized from childhood are the motivating and regulating force for individual and, more important from our view-point, social behaviour.

The whole fabric of Bhaca social life is shot through with ritual and it is impossible within the scope of this paper to describe in detail all ceremonial. A reference to the more important occasions on which ritual killings are made will serve to indicate its

<sup>6</sup> Callaway, H., *The Religious System of the AmaZulu*, 1868-70, p. 105. See also Hunter, M., *Reaction to Conquest*, 1936, pp. 269-70 on this point.



pervasiveness. It will be seen that the slaughtering of either a beast or a goat is a fundamental element. This is always performed by the head of the *umti* or his representative, with a special spear handed down from father to son and reserved for ritual purposes, and it is stated that the victim should bellow or bleat on being stabbed so that the *amathfongo* may hear and attend the feast. It should be noted that the position of "priest" is structurally determined, being held by the senior male representative of household, lineage or clan, depending on the social group involved.

At various pivotal stages in the life of the individual, sacrifices are made to propitiate the *amathfongo* and ensure their goodwill and co-operation. The important phenomenon of birth is conceived to be attended by the shades and, if it is delayed unduly,<sup>7</sup> the *umti* head will drive the cattle from the kraal into the *inkundla* (courtyard) until they are in front of the woman's hut. "If one of the cattle passes water, it is said that the ancestors are complaining." An old woman, a member of the husband's family (if the birth is taking place at his home), is called on to *bonga* (praise) the ancestors,<sup>8</sup> asking them what is wrong and pleading with them to facilitate the birth. In extreme cases a diviner may be consulted and "she will say that the ancestors want meat, and a beast will be slaughtered for an *idzini*" (see below) at which the lungs, heart and coagulated blood (*ububendze*) will be offered to the spirits. Among the Bhaca a first child must be born at the home of its maternal grandfather, if at all possible, and if the trouble is diagnosed as being sent by the maternal ancestors, he will provide the beast and perform the *idzini* instead of the father. As soon as the child is born the women begin shouting and singing while the ancestors are praised by those

present. When a woman has given birth the Bhaca say, *Ithfongo likabawo lisebentile* (The shade of my father has worked). After a birth the mother is confined to the hut for about a week and a few days after the end of the confinement period the father of the child slaughters a goat called *imbeleko* at a special thanksgiving ceremony at his own home, to thank the *amathfongo* for the safe delivery of the child. The *imbeleko* is not always killed for a baby, but, if it is not, there is the danger of the child becoming sick, and many say that it will refuse to take the breast. The skin of the *imbeleko* goat is reserved exclusively for the child for which it was killed, and is used for tying it to its mother's back.

Although there is no form of initiation into full tribal membership of Bhaca boys,<sup>9</sup> all pagan girls at the time of their first menstruation should go through a special ceremony marking their transition from girlhood to womanhood (*umngquzo*).<sup>10</sup> In a complex of ceremonies including the seclusion of the girl, the observance of certain food taboos, feasting and a ritual washing at the river, one of the most important is the ritual killing of the *umhlonyane* goat. As soon as the father knows of the event, the goats of the *umti* are driven in from the veld by a uterine brother of the girl and one is selected and killed with the sacrificial spear. The *imbethfu*, of special ritual significance (see below), is cut off, lightly roasted and given to the girl, who receives it with crossed arms, nibbles at it and spits it out. The initiate is called *umalukhube* and no one is allowed to eat of the meat until she has ritually tasted the *imbethfu*.

The gall of the slaughtered goat is given to the girl to sip, after which some is taken by her paternal grandmother, or any old woman of the *umti* standing in that classificatory relationship to her, and smeared

<sup>7</sup> According to informants a common reason for this is that "the woman has not been properly *lobola'd* and the ancestors are angry".

<sup>8</sup> Usually referred to as *ookhokho* or *oogogo*, i.e. grandparents.

<sup>9</sup> An increasing number, however, are attending Hlubi circumcision schools in the Kinira and Ncome locations. See my "The attainment of adult status among the Mount Frere Bhaca", *African Studies*, 17, 1, 1958, pp. 16-20.

<sup>10</sup> A modified form performed by Christians and "school people" is differentiated by the name *ipati* (Eng. "party").



over her body, the gall bladder being tied to her arm. On the final day of feasting, three or four head of cattle are slaughtered by the girl's father, his brother also usually contributing a beast, and here again the gall bladders are tied to her arms with cords of *umkhanzi* grass. During the whole of the seclusion period the initiate must observe certain food taboos, notably that against drinking milk, and, at its termination, her father sacrifices a further goat, called *dliiswa'ntusi* (the being made to consume milk), to mark her aggregation into normal social life.

As we should expect from its fundamental importance in the social structure, marriage, among the Bhaca, is characterized by a complex series of rites and activities marking the transference of the wife from her group to that of her husband. It is impossible here to detail all the ritual killings that punctuate the progression of the ceremonies; reference will be made mainly to one, the killing of a goat called *ubhokh'ujajile* (the naked goat) or *umathula'ntabeni*. The killing is done both at the bride's home and at the groom's on the arrival of the *icece* or bridal party. On arrival the bride and her attendants are shown to a special hut set aside for them, in which they all sit in a circle against the wall. They are offered mats on which to sit but refuse them until the goat is driven in with the words "Here is your mat." All the cooking relating to the bride's party is in the hands of an elderly friend from her home, usually a relative, called *umhlomli*, and she takes the raw liver and second stomach, as well as the gall bladder, on a grass mat to the bride. The latter is told to drink part of the gall, while the bladder is tied to her head, and the rest of the meat is divided, according to set rules, between the members of the two groups. The names of some other killings made during the marriage are: *banyathsiswa amanti* (drinking of water), to welcome the groom's representatives; *umngcamisa* (farewell), killed when the bride leaves finally for her husband's home, and *umgqubuthselo* (covering), the skin of which is used for the headdress worn by a young bride in

respect (*hlonipha*) for the father-in-law. The wearing of the gall bladders is a feature of the first two killings.

Ritual killings may also be made on other occasions, as in the ceremony performed to cleanse a couple guilty of incestuous relations, to lift the milk taboos of a bride at her husband's *umti*, and on the birth of twins, to mention but a few.

Finally, at burial, the transition rite between the status of tribesman and *ithfongo*, killings are made to remove the contamination associated with the corpse. It is the living who are conceived to be in danger due to this ritual impurity; the dead man is beyond human frailties and is buried with his blankets, sticks and other personal belongings, while grains of maize and kaffir corn were formerly placed in his hands. After the funeral all those present ritually wash their hands and an ox called *inkomo yokuhlamba* (the beast of washing) is killed at the kraal of the deceased, while the mourning period of one year for the widow, during which time she shaves her head and washes the fat out of her skin skirt, is brought to a close by the slaughtering of a goat or beast called *intlambo*.

The question arises as to whether the ceremonies described above are in fact religious. It will be seen that in some of these cases the killing is made for the express purpose of thanking or appeasing the ancestral shades, i.e., the act of propitiation is the primary motivating feature of the rite. Others form part of a complex of rites and stress pivotal and socially significant peaks in the ceremonies. In killings of both types there usually occurs the common element of the drinking of the gall and the wearing of dried gall bladders, a rite intimately connected with the spirits. It is suggested, however, that, from the point of view of the ancestor cult, the touchstone of whether a rite is "religious" or not is its sanction, and, in all these cases, neglect of custom is thought to be visited by the displeasure of the *amathfongo* with its resultant sickness and perhaps death. More positively, the performance of the ritual ensures the goodwill and blessing of the ancestors and



the well-being of society.

In addition to the above there are several other ways of influencing the spirits.

Perhaps the most spectacular and important of all ritual killings are those made at the initiation of a diviner (*isangoma*).<sup>11</sup> Although Bhaca religious participation is, as we have seen, structurally determined to a large degree, the profession of diviner is the one religious or quasi-religious role unconnected with structural status. It is open to anyone irrespective of birth, and thus provides a means whereby intelligent or ambitious individuals can attain status and power in the community. The call to take up the profession emanates from the *amathfongo* in the form of a sickness called *ukuthfwas*. It is characterized by severe pains in the head and body accompanied by vivid dreams, thought to be sent by the spirits. On becoming ill with symptoms that suggest *ukuthfwas*, the subject will usually go to a practising diviner, who will indicate which spirit is troubling, and arrange the period of training and initiation which will cure the sickness. A person ill with *ukuthfwas* is thought to be possessed by the spirit of an ancestor, usually paternal but occasionally maternal, and the training consists mainly of *iintlombe* (séances) at which the novice dances (*ukuxhentisa*) and through which the shade can be made manifest and operate through the human vehicle without causing sickness. Refusal to submit to treatment is dangerous as the *ithfongo* may retaliate by sending nausea, sickness and even death. Throughout the initiatory period the novice is troubled by dreams, sent by the shades, and, generally, of all the Bhaca, the *itangoma* are those closest and in continued contact with the shades. At séances, when the *amathfongo* are invoked, a special goat called *umathul'entabeni* is killed and the entrails hung at the back of the hut while the gall bladder is dried and attached to the distinguishing white bead headdress. At the initiation proper a beast called

*inkomo yokuphuma* (the beast of coming-out) is slaughtered, the meat divided between the initiate, attending diviners and guests, and the stomach fat rolled into ropes and fastened across the initiate's breast "so that the *amathfongo* may come".<sup>12</sup>

The three other main rituals of propitiation and worship are the killings at the *idzini* ceremony, killings in certain contexts of thanksgiving, and beer-offerings.

The form of the Bhaca *idzini* appears to differ to some extent from the Mpondo *idini* recorded by Hunter.<sup>13</sup> All sickness is conceived to have been sent by some anti-social agency, and no disease, except extreme senility, is ever considered to have been contracted by natural causes. The most usual cause is conceived to be the machinations of some enemy using medicines to cause sickness and death. Sickness, as we have seen, may also be sent by the ancestors to punish some neglect of custom or other inadvertent annoyance. There are other occasions, however, when illness is sent because the *amathfongo* wish to eat, and a beast must be killed to propitiate them.

When a person is ill, he may dream constantly of a particular beast, and this is regarded as proof that the spirits wish the animal to be sacrificed. This may also be ascertained by consulting a diviner as to the cause of the illness. In all such cases a beast, goat or sheep is killed for, say the Bhaca, the *amathfongo* are hungry for meat. The most common form of *idzini* made for a sick person is for all the cattle of the herd to be brought in from the fields and herded into the cattle kraal. They are then suddenly driven into the *inkundla* (courtyard) right up to the door of the hut in which the sick person is lying. It is said that the cattle must be driven by an old woman of the kraal-head's family—"an old grandmother, almost an *ithfongo* herself, and past child-bearing" (thus not subject to the *umlaza* sexual taboos). The first beast to pass water or sniff at the thatch above the door

<sup>11</sup> Note that Bhaca terminology here is Zulu, not Xhosa.

<sup>12</sup> See W. D. Hammond-Tooke, "The Initiation of a Baca Isangoma diviner", *African Studies*, 14, 1, 1955, pp. 16-22. See also Hunter, *op. cit.*, pp. 320-41 for a description of Mpondo diviners (*amagqira*).

<sup>13</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 241. It also does not have the ritual beast *inkomo yobuluunga*.



of the hut is said to be the beast chosen by the ancestors and is called *inkomo yethfongo* (the beast of the ancestral shade). As it sniffs, the old woman addresses the troubling spirits by name and adds, *Yek' umntfu lo; thsaths'inkomo le* (Leave this person; take this beast), the beast then being killed in the cattle kraal with the sacrificial spear. After skinning, the *imbethfu* (part behind the shoulder blade, of special ritual significance, Xh. *intsonyama*) is cut off and lightly roasted, to be tasted by the patient before the meat is divided. The piece of *imbethfu* is handed to the patient by the old woman and, it is stated, he must eat the whole else the appeal to the ancestors will have no effect and the rest of the meat will have to be thrown away. After the *imbethfu* has been eaten the rest of the carcass is cut up by the young men of the kraal, the sick person is given the liver (a special delicacy) and his body is smeared with the gall. The *inyongo* (gall bladder), specially associated with the ancestors, is fastened with strips of hide to both wrists. The patient receives the meat with crossed arms, like a novice at the initiation of a diviner, or a girl during initiation, and first sucks the meat before eating it. The wind-pipe, lungs and heart, with the *injeke* (second stomach), are hung up at the back of the hut as an offering to the *amathfongo* who are thought to partake of it during the night, while the rest of the meat is divided between those present. Occasions for ritual killings are known throughout the district and all those who possibly can attend the ceremony attracted by the possibility of getting meat. As Hunter has pointed out,<sup>14</sup> ritual killings have thus an important dietetic function, ensuring a certain consumption of meat in a society in which cattle or stock are seldom killed purely for food. No beer is made at an *idzini* "because beer is there to make people happy, and people are sorry when a person is sick".

The missions in the district object strongly to the *idzini* as a pagan sacrifice, and all informants maintained that the custom is

dying out. One church elder spoke heatedly against the ceremony, supporting his argument with the words, "People say that the *idzini* was made for the Prodigal Son, but we do not read of any hanging" (referring to the hanging of the entrails). A woman of forty had never personally seen the ritual performed and all agree that, if done, it is performed secretly. It would be announced that a beast is being killed "just for meat" but "all the time it is for the ancestors". The influence of the missions in the district is very strong, making the study of traditional ritual extremely difficult. Very few informants would admit actually slaughtering for the ancestors, or making beer offerings, so that I had no opportunity of studying this important aspect of indigenous religion. All admitted the dogma of the ancestral cult as it was possible to reconcile this belief with the tenets of Christianity, but the outward, ritual aspect, frowned on by the churches, is seldom given overt expression.

Finally, a beast is slaughtered as a special thanksgiving (*umbuliso*) on the return of a person from a long journey, as when a young man returns safely from the mines, "to thank the *amathfongo* for keeping him safe." It is usual to kill a beast on the first return, and, after subsequent trips, a goat.

The main occasions of religious and quasi-religious ceremonial have been indicated briefly. Christianity has driven many of the public ceremonies underground and data are lacking on the details of beer offerings, but the above will serve to emphasise the fact that, through ritual, Bhaca religious theory is made manifest.

#### SOME ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE ANCESTOR CULT

Bhaca theology does not necessarily carry the ethical implications inherent in our concept of religion. The more developed religious systems of the world are characterized by a more or less rigid body of systematized taboos and precepts aimed at some type of goal, usually the attainment of the

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 268.



"good life" and immortality. Ethical principles, internalized by teaching and conditioning from childhood, are often reinforced by the concept of an after-life in which the good will be justified and the bad punished. Then, too, in many religions, the implicit aim is to provide a means of harmonizing individual behaviour and relationships and secure the smooth functioning of the society.

The question of Bantu morality and, more particularly, its relation to Bhaca religion is a difficult and complex one outside the scope of this paper. It is pertinent, however, from our general sociologically orientated viewpoint, to note some features of Bhaca ethics and to try and ascertain its relation to the other categories we have considered.

From our examination of the ancestor cult it is evident that the Bhaca have a belief in the existence of an after-life. The main difference between this concept and that taught by the great world religions is that a favourable status in the hereafter is attainable by all—irrespective of the quality of the life on earth. Both the good and the bad become shades, and there is no punishment for the wicked after death. Indeed the more unpleasant and malicious a man is during life, the more is he likely to be feared as an *ithfongo*. On the other hand, there is no system of special rewards for the "moral" man. The belief in immortality is therefore not an agent for the attainment of morality, and the question arises whether the Bhaca possess a system of ethics, and, if so, what mechanisms operate to ensure its observance.

As to the first question, we may quote Willoughby writing on Bantu morality generally<sup>15</sup>: "... The danger of taking the name of a god in vain is generally acknowledged; reverence for parents and those in authority is commonly inculcated, and disobedience punished; self-control is cultivated; men of probity are respected; brotherliness, courtesy and hospitality are

common virtues; a high respect for property prevails; mercy is highly esteemed and justice praised; murder, witchcraft, stealing, adultery, bearing false witness against one's neighbour, hatred, and arrogance are all condemned; and there is such a sense of family responsibility that orphans and destitute people are provided for." Hunter also states, "The ancestor cult is a sanction for morality in that it to some extent enforces right behaviour of children towards parents".<sup>16</sup> There is thus clearly a correspondence with the so-called world religions in this field.

These ethical principles are not pursued for their own end, however; the body of moral rules is closely correlated with social life and the social structure. Bhaca have no speculative philosophy as to the nature of good and evil as an intellectual abstraction; it is the empirical determination of the good or bad in the contexts of everyday relationships and attitudes that forms the corpus of moral rules. Morality is essentially utilitarian. Thus sexual intercourse before marriage is not condemned, and, if it conforms to the rigid rules of the *ukutshina* custom (Xh. *ukumetsha*, external sexual intercourse), is socially approved. It is only when the rules are broken and pregnancy results that the sex act becomes morally bad. A social problem has arisen in the form of an illegitimate child, difficult to assimilate adequately into the social structure. Then, too, truth for its own sake is not necessarily valued, and lying not condemned if it harmonizes relationships and prevents disruption and antagonisms. It would seem that Bhaca ethics, the criterion of good and evil, is derived from two main considerations. The first is whether an action operates towards the observation of custom, i.e. towards conservatism. Conservatism is an important agent ensuring cultural continuity and its correlate, social solidarity. Neglect of custom is bad and lowers the resistance of the group to possibly harmful change, and it is not for nothing

<sup>15</sup> Willoughby, W. C., *Nature-worship and Taboo*, 1932, pp. 36-40, 74-77.

<sup>16</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 267.



that the Bhaca emphasise the importance of "keeping the custom". As we have seen, ritual plays an important part in this field. The second is whether an action is disruptive to the smooth working or solidarity of personal relations; conflict between the individual and the group, or between individuals, must be eliminated as far as possible. It is suggested that the application of these criteria furnish a yardstick whereby Bhaca ethical concepts may be measured.

The question arises as to what, in the absence of a system of rewards and punishments, are the sanctions ensuring moral conduct. Educative conditioning from childhood is an important force—people observe tribal custom and enter into harmonious social relations because they are brought up to do so. The ultimate sanction, however, is the fear of the displeasure of the *amathfongo*. They are always on the look-out for breaches of custom. Bhaca constantly stress the danger of annoying the shades through failing to sacrifice the beast seen in a dream or neglecting the ritual killing at one of the many ceremonies that punctuate social life. Thus the sanction for religious conformity is fear—fear of spiritual retaliation, not, however, in a future life, but in this.<sup>17</sup> The *amathfongo* are not always thought to be malicious, but it is their anger which has sociological significance. It is important to note here that this fear does not necessarily entail an attitude of humility or adoration towards the ancestral spirits. We have seen how the transformation from living tribesman to *ithfongo* tends to be merged in the case of very old people and the fact that the spirits have often been intimately known in life, with all their faults and weaknesses, lends a strong anthropomorphic flavour to worship. In ritual the spirits are often addressed conversationally, and, on occasions, scolded for the harsh treatment of their children.

It would be a mistake, however, to consider fear as the only sociologically significant motivating attitude in relations between the living and the dead, although it is perhaps the most important. It is doubtful whether any religion can operate only through negative impulses. From its very nature there is a strong emotional interaction, in the ancestor cult, between the shades and their living descendants, an extension, albeit with qualitative overtones, of the patterns obtaining in life. It is extremely difficult to penetrate the realities of Bhaca values in this field in terms of the question, "What does religion mean to the Bhaca?" It is probable that a sense of satisfaction is derived from the performance of the ritual for its own sake, from the conformity to social norms with its attendant public approval and from the emotional stimulus of corporate communion. Mental values are translated into motor activity. Related to this is the sense of having pleased the *amathfongo*, of basking in the light of their approval, of a drawing together of the threads between the seen and the unseen worlds.<sup>18</sup> As among all peoples, however, the depth and quality of religious experience differs markedly between individuals, depending on fundamental psychological factors.

In the final analysis this rests on relationship patterns that have been built up before death, ultimately in the attitudes between father and children or, more particularly, father and sons, and, in a consideration of moral sanctions, these play a complementary role to motivations of fear. Between father and children, among the Bhaca, there often exists a strong bond of affection and it is a man's greatest desire to have offspring to carry on his name, work for him and to perform the necessary sacrifices to his departed spirit. Affection often deepens into unselfish love, and fathers

<sup>17</sup> Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 267, seems to doubt whether the ancestors send punishment or sickness in cases of incest, murder or any other crime. Ethics, as discussed here, however, is not confined to such "formal" crimes, and is taken to include offences on a much wider basis. It is considered that, to the Bhaca, "immorality" is equated with breach of custom.

<sup>18</sup> According to Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., *Structure and function in primitive society*, 1952, pp. 175-6, the main element of the religious experience is the sense of dependence on the object of worship, "and that it is by constantly maintaining this sense of dependence that religions perform their social functions" (p. 177).



are as prone to spoil children as are their mothers. All his life a son is under his father's control and, in law, a father is responsible for his son's misdeeds. He must consult his father in all important matters and, ideally, is expected to bow to his wishes in choosing his wife; although, in practice, this is not always done. On the other hand, a father is responsible for paying fines imposed on his son and must assist him by providing cattle for the *ikhazi* (bride wealth). If a son's clothes are confiscated by the father of the girl to whom he is making love, the girl's relatives will go straight to his father who will redeem them by the payment of the *umnyobo* fine of £5, unless his son's behaviour has seriously angered him.

In return for the *ikhazi* cattle a son is expected to "keep the father", i.e. support him in his old age, and, when young, he must help in herding, weeding, ploughing and running messages. If unmarried and employed, he is expected to send money home regularly to his father. Even after leaving his father's *umti* a man should ask his father's advice and consult him, "if he is a good father". If a man makes a feast or holds a beer drink his father should be the first to know about it and his advice must be asked about which ox to slaughter. A father will often also help at his son's *umti*, seeing that the horses are fed and welcoming strangers if the son is away from home. Old Milandu lived nearby with his wife and spent most of his time at his son's *umti*, pottering around and doing odd jobs for him. A father is responsible for the health of his son and performs the ritual killing for him if he is sick. Even when he has his own independent household, a son consults his father when about to kill ritually, and if the father is too old or infirm to attend, he will be sent the liver, kidneys and choice bits of meat. The attitude of the society to these relations of respect and co-operation is expressed proverbially when a son is antagonized or neglects his father:

*Ulahle imbo yakhe ngophoyiyana* (He loses a good thing because of a bauble) and often people will refuse to help him. At death it is a son's duty to bury his father and a father his son, if he pre-deceases him.<sup>19</sup>

The above description serves to throw some light on Bhaca attitudes towards the ancestral spirits. The love, respect and deference accorded a father is transferred to his shade, and, with the fear and awe of the supernatural, comprises the complex, ambivalent reality that motivates ritual and ethical behaviour.

#### SOME SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF BHACA RELIGION

It will be seen from the above that religion is a powerful sanction for social control. The ancestor cult is based primarily on the family group and its related kin organizations—the basis on which the society is built—and can thus be said to be organic and rooted in the fundamental institutions of the society. It is not an exotic superstructure with voluntary participation; rather is it governed by blood ties and affiliations. In so far as it concerns the individual family it tends to be territorially organized as a local unit, but this is not so on the clan plane. The socio-political structure of the tribe is based on the important principles of patriliney, primogeniture and respect for seniors. This the cult takes and re-inforces through its dogma. The well-being and prosperity of the living depend on the continued goodwill of the dead, the seniors who have passed on, and fear of annoying the *amathfongo* is a powerful sanction against neglect and disobedience, not only of the dead but of one's living elders. Disobedience of a father or elder relative may be punished by sickness and death of man or beast.

The ritual of the cult is a further force consolidating family ties. At ritual killings brothers and sisters of the kraal-head are summoned to take part and share in the special meat eaten only by family members.

<sup>19</sup> It follows from this that a strong personal element enters into religious attitudes, causing them to shade from extreme adoration and respect to mere tolerance backed by fear, depending on the father-son relationship. Our task here is to describe the socially approved norm.



These ritual occasions serve to re-emphasize family loyalties and interdependence for spiritual welfare. It will be seen that the worship of the ancestors is essentially a lineage cult, extending occasionally to include rites involving more than one lineage (on the clan level), and it is possible to interpret beer and meat offerings as a ceremonial communion between the living and dead lineage members, stressing group continuity and the solidarity that comes from mutual co-operation and respect.

All this has a direct bearing on social integration. The worship of family and lineage founders creates even greater bonds of solidarity within the close group, supplementing those formed by ties of blood, and this extends to the more loosely integrated grouping of the clan. Religion on a tribal scale is more particularly associated with the function of chieftainship and the great ceremonies of *ingcubhe* (the festival of the first fruits),<sup>20</sup> rainmaking and the blessing of the seed, while in time of war the powerful founding ancestors are invoked by their living representative, the chief. Worship (ritual) tends to be much more dynamic, sociologically speaking, than dogma, and the fact of common religious participation within a group acts as a powerful cohesive force between its members. Participation in worship, no matter how restricted, tends to check individualism, the enemy of conservatism and solidarity. More specifically much religious ritual is directed towards the protection of society and its continuance in time, and, in this sphere, is closely linked with magical techniques.<sup>21</sup> Much of the chief's authority stems from his intimate association with the spiritual guardians of the tribe, his ancestors, and the all-important mystical attributes of the chieftainship are based on the tenets of Bhaca religion.<sup>22</sup>

It follows from this that the role of religion is not, among the Bhaca, confined

to specifically religious spheres, but impinges on secular life at all crises which involve the individual and society. Birth, initiation, marriage and death are marked by elaborate ceremonials all of which are directed, at least in part, towards the spirit world. It seems that any attainment of a new status<sup>23</sup> with its peculiarly intense individual-society relationship, is an important generating point for religious expression.

The most important aspect of Bhaca religion from a sociological point of view is this predominance of ritual. Theory (dogma, belief) tends to be an intensely individual phenomenon which has sociological significance only when it affects the quality of social relations, individual ethical conduct, or, through its practical manifestation, ritual. In the absence of a professional priesthood, conformity to an absolute body of dogma is neither practicable nor necessary, belief differing with individuals.

In conclusion it might be pertinent to distinguish between religions which operate through voluntary associations (as with us) and those like the Bhaca ancestor cult, which I term "primitive" or "structural". The emergence of voluntary associations based on religion is a feature of more advanced societies in which there is a tendency for them to cut across social boundaries and even spread beyond the confines of the originating society, e.g. Christianity and Mohammedanism. Some of the characteristics of what may be called a "world" religion are as follows: It is open, at least in theory, to all, irrespective of class, colour, tribe or social group; its worship is usually directed towards a high god (or gods), the object of general adoration (i.e. it is centralized); it is not geographically determined; is usually strongly proselytizing, although not always so, e.g. Buddhism; and with a relatively highly elaborated dogma. In the sphere of ritual, religious expression

<sup>20</sup> Hammond-Tooke, W. D., "The function of annual first fruit ceremonies in Baca social structure", *African Studies*, 12, 2, 1953, pp. 75-87.

<sup>21</sup> It is not intended in this essay to discuss the relationship between religion and magic.

<sup>22</sup> See Fortes, M., and Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (eds.), *African Political Systems*, 1941, pp. 16-22, for a discussion of this topic.

<sup>23</sup> By this is meant the attainment of structural status through age (e.g. birth, initiation to full tribal membership), marriage and death (the status of *ihfongo*).



tends to be confined to specific spiritual contexts but appears in such social situations as marriage and death. Bhaca religion, on the other hand, belongs to the type rooted in the social structure, more especially the basic structural groups of biological origin, e.g. family, lineage and clan, and derives its form and essential genius from this fact. This does not imply that the so-called world religion is not structurally determined, it being modified and adapted by the various exotic social structures on which it may be engrafted, but it is considered that there exists an essential qualitative difference between the two types. In sharp contrast to the features listed above, primitive Bhaca religion is characterized by the following: The place of the individual *vis-à-vis* his object of worship is determined by birth; each family, in the first place, worships its own immediate ancestral spirits, i.e. worship is local and decentralized; religious experience is to a large extent geographically determined as the family tends to be a local group (this is less so in cases of communal clan worship), and from its nature it is not proselytizing. As we have noted above, it possesses very little theoretical content and

its expression is inherent in a large number of predominantly secular contexts. Both "world" and Bhaca religion, however, possess several features in common. Both are based on dogmatic assumptions, however meagre, which find expression through ritual, and both are connected with some form of ethical system relying on supernatural sanctions.

This, then, is a brief survey of the main features of Bhaca religion at the present time, as it operates on the social plane. The important questions of its psychological basis, emotional satisfactions to the individual *per se*, psychopathological aberrations and varying individual attitudes stemming from personality differences, have not been touched on as being outside the scope of what is essentially a sociological interpretation. Today perhaps the greatest and most thorough-going cleavage in Bhaca society is that between Christian and pagan, and the concepts and rites described above are fast becoming absorbed into a general Christian framework. All the evidence seems to indicate, however, that the movement is towards synthesis rather than complete displacement.

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## LAND RIGHTS ON THE TANGANYIKA COAST

R. E. S. TANNER\*

### INTRODUCTION

The area under study is a patch-work of large sisal estates, which have been under non-African control for the past fifty years, and enclaves of fishing and agricultural villages of locally born or alien Africans who have been brought up with this industry as an alternative means of livelihood. Some villages are far from estates and their inhabitants are not restricted by their presence except for the normal draw away of their young people looking for employment. Village 'A' is ten miles away from the nearest estate, and is the community least affected by the changes brought on by industrialisation. Other villages have expanded in their original localities and are larger and more permanent because estates are near enough to provide work and trade without causing any profound alteration in their local way of life. Village 'B' lies midway between two estates which can be reached daily on foot by those who wish to work there. These estates were originally laid down in empty land and in the course of time a fringe of settlement has grown up round them, largely composed of their present and past labourers who have decided to set up on their own. Village 'C' has grown up along the main road where it passes between two large estates and is dominated by them.

This study was undertaken to find the extent of the changes in land rights and use which had been caused by the existence of large-scale industry nearby.

### OWNERSHIP OF LAND

Throughout this area the isolated compound, the small hamlet and the large village with over a hundred houses in close proximity—all have the same social system knitting together their component parts. The

framework is always a real or assumed relationship in recent or remote generations between the various households, some of which are even more closely interwoven through numerous marriages of which few are long-standing.

In the vernacular there is little to differentiate wide variations in village size. Each village regards itself as independent although it falls, with other villages, under a Government-recognized headman for administrative purposes. The headman has no part in the internal government of the village except in so far as he has gained a prominent position through his own social status and ability. It follows therefore that no scheme of land control and usage could be dependent on his administration.

A member of the village will usually refer to the cultivated land within the village area as "our fields", and if questioned further he would probably give the name of the head of the hamlet or household concerned, rather than that of the person actually cultivating. If someone from another village is asked, he will reply that they are the fields of such and such a village.

If men or women are asked about the fields which they are cultivating, each will claim that they are his own, and it is only if one enquires further that a man will state that he works with one or other of his wives or independently, or that a woman will admit that her husband has a right in the land or the harvest. The father will claim ownership of the fields cultivated by his sons and sons-in-law, while a son-in-law will claim the fields to which he has a right only for the duration of the marriage. A woman may cultivate a field by herself and own the harvest, but she has an obligation to contribute to the maintenance of her family. If she is assisted in the field

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\* Mr R. E. S. Tanner is a District Officer at present situated at Musoma, Lake Tanganyika.



by her husband she will only own a part of the crop, although she will control the use of the harvest for the benefit of the household. The husband correspondingly may own the crop and have the right to sell it although he will have little say in its use within the household. Cash crops however are the outright property of the owner, although, after their sale, he will still have to fulfil his family obligations with the proceeds. There are an infinite number of variations in ownership which lie hidden under the answers to everyday questioning.

There is neither individual nor communal ownership of land since exclusive rights do not exist, and cultivated land is the object of an amalgam of rights and obligations not only in the land itself but in the ownership and control of the harvest.

The village elders, who are an informal group of the old and the wise, may allow newcomers to occupy empty land, but, other than this, they have no control over, or rights in, cultivated land until it has been abandoned for longer than a period of ten years when the bush has regrown to its original density. This control over vacant land, which may have been strong in the past, is now nominal and may be no more than a talking point.

The people themselves understand by land rights, not only varying rights in land under cultivation but rights to land sufficient for their needs. This originally was taken to be the right to sufficient land to maintain their families in food, but has now been extended to include the right to obtain sufficient land for the planting of cash crops, the sale of which would go to satisfying the desires fostered by a cash economy and encouraged by a plethora of small shops.

This alteration in their ideas on land rights has caused little trouble within the village, but has led Africans increasingly to regard land long occupied by non-African estates as their rightful expansion areas, regardless of the fact that the removal of the estates would modify basically, if not totally disrupt, their present agricultural economy and standards of living. However attractive such a cry may be politically, it is largely nulli-

fied in Villages 'B' and 'C' by the number of men who have taken paid employment in the nearby estates and who do not choose to exercise their land rights. In the latter village, where there is still some vacant land nearby, the proportion of people cultivating or holding land is so small that the proximity of large estate areas has not caused the price of land to rise in comparison to the other two villages.

In the peripheral areas of the villages, the primary right holder will be the person who first cleared the land, but nearer to the villages, which may have been established on their present sites for over a century, such a classification is not possible, and the village as a whole becomes the primary right holder, and active land rights devolve onto secondary right holders and so on.

In conclusion it seems that the rights of persons in land are individualistic because there is only one person for each field who controls and directs its cultivation. If, however, rights in land rather than the rights of persons in land, are being defined, they are communal since the harvest and the disposal of the land come under family control, with the possible exception of land under perennial crops.

#### OBTAINING LAND THROUGH KINSHIP (TABLES I AND II)

A man has rights to sufficient land as well as to specific fields for annual crops in the area of his natal village or to a qualified extent where his father is living if the family has moved. Although he can only exercise these rights over land for annual crops while he is living with his family, they never lapse even if he is away for life. Children inherit such rights so that they can return to their ancestral village and obtain land even after an absence of several generations.

The rights of cognates to land in their natal village could only be nullified if a parent should curse his child. Some children have been cursed by their parents, but, as they were usually petty criminals living away from home, no land rights were involved. In effect no one can be denied land in his natal village if he can find a right holder



willing to let him have access to some part of his land.

Land is obtained agnatically by both men and women and their rights in the land are held independently as the family is not the agricultural unit for most of the area. If there is no agnatic link, the land is obtained through a matrilineal connection.

A man or woman always has this generalised right to land wherever he is cognatically connected, but he will have no specific land for annual crops unless he is resident there. No cases were found in which fields were held in the name of absent relatives.

because the instability of all marriages is assumed, and therefore they obtain fields from other primary land holders in their wives' villages or by taking up empty land on the periphery; such a newcomer would be able then to remain in the village after a divorce because his land is held independently of any marital obligations. The children of a dissolved marriage, in which the father was an immigrant, would be able to secure land through their mother's family to whom they would be more firmly attached despite the nominally patrilineal social system.

*Table I: Land obtained through kinship for annual crops*

	Obtained through father's line		Obtained through mother's line		Obtained by marriage		Total obtained from kinship	Total population
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women		
<i>Village A</i> .. .. .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	292
Isolated from industry (Total fields owned: .. .. .)	82 by men and 1	12 by women = ..	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	194)	
<i>Village B</i> .. .. .	44	46	7	1	3	22	123	446
Industry in area (Total fields owned: .. .. .)	172 by men and	96 by women =	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	268)	
<i>Village C</i> .. .. .	9	11	5	1	3	1	30	509
Near to industry (Total fields owned: .. .. .)	86 by men and	34 by women =	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	120)	

As there is no discernible land shortage even in the villages near to the estates, it was not possible to find land-holdings showing the relative importance of kinship links with the more distantly related persons holding the less fertile land.

As most families have intermarried, and as well have a large number of functionally active classificatory relatives, it is possible for most men and women to obtain land for annual crops in a number of villages, some of which would be outside the area covered by this study.

Although there is a formal system of kinship based on agnation, they stress the relationship which is of the most value to them at any particular moment so as to give themselves a genuine status in the locality of their choice. Few alien men obtain land from the families of their wives

The three villages show very few fields which were obtained through marriage. Only in Village 'B', where it is possible to work on the nearby estates and to cultivate as well, have some of the wives of newcomers chosen to cultivate in order to supplement their husbands' earnings.

The rights of women to land must be considered independently of their marital status not only because the married family is very impermanent and does not form an agricultural unit, but also because many men and women prefer to remain divorced rather than to take on what they consider to be profitless obligations under a cash economy.

A married woman under local Islamic custom need not assist her husband in agricultural work and, because of the ease with which women may be divorced, most of them prefer to cultivate separately. A



husband must provide for his wife, and the main incentive for the wife to cultivate lies in the inability of the husband to provide adequately for her and her children.

The divorced woman has no one who is obliged to work for her, and, although she may live with one or other of her parents, she must maintain herself just as if she were living separately. Most of these women take over rice plots from their mothers or open up small cassava fields in the coconut plantations of their relatives. The tendency for divorced women to remain unmarried is recent, and it has resulted in both sexes'

tained in most cases by inheritance or were still in the hands of their original owners.

#### OBTAINING LAND WITHOUT KINSHIP (TABLES III AND IV)

As we have seen, all land under cultivation, or which still shows signs of having once been cultivated, has a primary right holder and it is only the uncut bush on the edge of village land which can be called vacant.

A man or woman who is not a cognatic member of the village community has rights in his fields for as long as he is resident there

*Table II: Land obtained through kinship for perennial crops*

	Obtained through father's line		Obtained through mother's line		Obtained by marriage		Total obtained from kinship	Total population
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women		
<i>Village A</i> .. .. .	41	15	7	4	—	4	71	292
Isolated from industry (Total plantations owned: ..	74 by	men and	23 by	women =	.. ..	.. ..	97)	
<i>Village B</i> .. .. .	54	75	10	2	—	4	145	446
Industry in area (Total plantations owned: ..	120 by	men and	85 by	women =	.. ..	.. ..	205)	
<i>Village C</i> .. .. .	24	16	5	—	1	—	46	509
Near to industry (Total plantations owned: ..	30 by	men and	17 by	women =	.. ..	.. ..	47)	

having the same rights to their own fields as well as sufficient land for their needs where they live. There are few cases of women taking up fallow land for the planting of perennial crops.

These three villages show clearly the developing pattern of land-holding for annual crops. In Village 'A' where there is unlimited land available, kinship is ignored, but in Village 'B' where land-holdings are restricted by the advantages of living in the village rather than at a distance, fields are often retained within the family. In Village 'C' the proximity of the estates has made it less necessary to cultivate, and the high mobility of the population reduces the degree to which land is inherited or obtained from relatives. Coconut plantations were ob-

and only because of his residence. Such a person is classified as a stranger (*mgeni*), as opposed to a cognatic relative (*mwenyeji*), even though he may have married a local person, and he will only cease to be classified as a stranger when, by reason of long residence, conversion to Islam and the birth of children to the marriage, he has become socially absorbed into the village community.

Newcomers to these villages are either immigrants moving north from the comparatively barren south into areas with greater fertility and rainfall, or migrant labourers who wish to settle on their own fields while still keeping up with their work on the nearby sisal estates.

In most cases the newcomer will have made



enquiries and contacted friends in the locality of his choice before he decides finally to settle there, and he will ask a primary rightholder for some fallow land which he will hold for as long as he wishes to cultivate there. If he should cultivate without the permission of the person claiming title to the land, he might be taken to court but this rarely happens. Jurally it would not be his land but he would be evicted by a combination of ostracism and fear of witchcraft rather than by law. It is unlikely that any immigrant would cultivate without such permission, because to do so would

holder of some fallow land (*shokoa*). In the past this payment was made to the elders of the village as a quasi-religious token of allegiance on becoming a permanent member of the community.

The derivation of *ubaani*, meaning incense, suggests that this payment was more in the nature of an offering to the ancestors of the village through the good-will of the elders than a commercial transaction. Such a payment to the elders of a community has been made not more than half-a-dozen times in the last 25 years.

These days individual rights are develop-

Table III: Land obtained without kinship for annual crops

	Obtained by clearing new land		Obtained by purchase		Obtained by other non-kinship means		Total obtained without kinship	Total population
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women		
<i>Village A</i> .. .. .	82	122	—	—	—	—	194	292
Isolated from industry (Total fields owned: .. ..)	82 by	men and	112 by	women	= .. ..	.. ..	194)	
<i>Village B</i> .. .. .	106	26	3	—	9	—	144	446
Industry in area (Total fields owned: .. ..)	172 by	men and	96 by	women	= .. ..	.. ..	268)	
<i>Village C</i> .. .. .	52	17	13	—	4	3	89	509
Near to industry (Total fields owned: .. ..)	86 by	men and	34 by	women	= .. ..	.. ..	120)	

be a denial of the immigrant's intention of becoming a member of the community of his choice.

The longer the immigrant stays in the village with even a nominal right to his fields, the more he will become absorbed into its life until the land which he works will come to be regarded as his own by right and inheritable by his children. When this happens, his heirs may let off part of this land to subsequent immigrants to whom they will be primary right-holders, thus extending their own area of social dominance.

If the immigrant wishes to obtain a quicker and more permanent stake in the village, he may obtain primary rights by making a payment (*ubaani*) to the right-

ing, and the agreement is made between the two individuals direct without any formal reference to the village elders, and varies in meaning from gate-money for fallow land in less settled areas to outright purchase in areas of land shortage.

It must be remembered that occupying land, even in an area of plantation industry, involves not only agriculture but also membership of a new community. It is always an advantage to settle near to neighbours, and only those who have special reasons for doing otherwise live apart—the aberrant character who likes loneliness, the social deviant who wants to brew illegal liquor or members of tribes from Portuguese East Africa who cannot readily absorb themselves into coastal society. The Zigua who are



probably not be noticed until after they have become well established, and these headmen are often not as knowledgeable on the numbers of people in their areas as their own statements would suggest.

Clearing new land or opening up a part of a deserted holding with the primary right-holder's permission, are the commonest methods of obtaining land for annual crops in all three villages. Even in Village 'C', surrounded by estates and heavily populated, sufficient land is available to satisfy demands for short-term use.

*Table IV: Land obtained without kinship for perennial crops*

	Obtained by clearing new land		Obtained by purchase		Obtained by other non- kinship means		Total obtained without kinship	Total popu- lations
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women		
<i>Village A</i> .. .. . Isolated from industry (Total plantations owned: ..	20	—	6	—	—	—	26	292
	74 by	men and	23 by	women =	.. ..	.. ..	97)	
<i>Village B</i> .. .. . Industry in area (Total plantations owned: ..	42	4	11	—	3	—	60	446
	120 by	men and	85 by	women =	.. ..	.. ..	205)	
<i>Village C</i> .. .. . Near to industry (Total plantations owned: ..	3	—	27	1	—	—	31	509
	60 by	men and	17 by	women =	.. ..	.. ..	47)	

have to be cleaned free of undergrowth annually to assist high yields often encourage immigrants to cultivate annual crops within their palm groves because it saves them the expense of cleaning that area themselves as well as providing them with watchmen against the prevalent nut thieves. Although the immigrant would never be deprived of land obtained in this way, he would never become a secondary right holder and any attempt by him to plant palms would be prevented.

The allocation of a large area for a non-African cattle ranch on a long lease caused little local objection, but when the Company planted palms as shade for its animals, it seemed to the whole village, who regarded themselves as the primary right holders of

Newcomers rarely approach headmen before occupying bush land where they will

this empty bush, that the Company had gone against the original agreement under which they were classified as immigrants, because they had planted permanent crops without prior permission. It seems unlikely that the village would have agreed to this alienation in the first place if palm planting had been projected from the start unless the Company had been prepared to make a private payment to them in recognition of the abolition of their primary rights.

In most areas locally born individuals have holdings of fallow land (*shokoa*) which may extend to hundreds of acres, but as their primary rights are usually combined with high social status, their rights are never challenged and the land remains empty even in densely occupied localities. Parts of fallow land holdings are occasionally sold for about £10 per acre but primary right holders, having sold a great amount of land at the beginning of the century at what they remember as very low rates, are no longer very willing to sell.

Standing crops such as maize and cassava are occasionally sold, but this gives no option on the permanent occupation of the land. Land required for or already planted up with coconuts is sold in all three villages, but it is only in Village 'C' where the large alien population wishes to establish itself that purchase becomes a common method.

If the newcomer intends to stay in the locality of his choice, he becomes very soon indistinguishable from the long-term inhabitants of the village. Owing to the ease with which he has obtained sufficient land for his needs, his absorption presents no problem.

There are many places in which immigrants from alien tribes, Ngindo, Ngoni, etc., have not only become primary right holders in the bush areas which they have opened up, but have thereby become the nuclei of colonies of other aliens.

It follows that the relative obtains land with the friendly assistance of his family but the newcomer, if he does not open up bush-land, becomes in the initial stages a dependant of the primary right-holders to whom he must show deference and pay the

obligations of clientship. The relationship is effectively shown in the common catch phrase, "every locally born man and his dependent stranger *kila mwenyeji na mshenzi wake*", which carries with it a marked assumption of social inferiority.

#### LAND WORKED FOR ANNUAL CROPS (TABLE V)

The cultivation of annual crops is not hindered by land shortage except perhaps in the neighbourhood of estates where there is always ample land available even if a short distance away. There is no doubt that non-African land holdings have not had any major effect on land use.

In Village 'A', isolated from industry, the majority cultivate annual crops of maize and cassava and those who do not cultivate are the old and infirm, the principal land-owners and traders, as well as the young men and women who although past puberty have not yet taken up definite roles in the community. The principal group of non-cultivators are married women who consider that their husbands should provide for them under Islamic law.

In Village 'B', with industry in its neighbourhood, the proportion of non-cultivators is about the same as in Village 'A', but larger numbers of them are employed in the nearby estates, and lack the opportunity to cultivate. At least three quarters of the men are employed to a greater or lesser degree on these estates, but it does not affect their regular cultivation of annual crops on which they mainly rely. Industrial employment in this area provides them with the opportunity to augment their incomes during slack periods in the home and fields and to insure them against the social disintegration which follows poor harvests.

In these two villages the extent of the land under annual crop is determined by the number of dependants of the cultivator and his physical or financial ability to get the work done. Under optimum conditions no holding, even in the peripheral areas of Zigua agriculturists, was greater than 3 acres. In no case was the unavailability of land a restriction on the acreage under cultivation.



Although the size of the area cultivated is adjusted to the needs of the cultivator, there is also considerable reduction because of sickness in the family, shortage of money to employ casual labour and other factors. A further reduction in area takes place when the man is self-employed or takes on semi-permanent employment although this is sometimes balanced by an extension of the area which is owned and planted up with coconut palms.

Although unworked areas may be regarded by the observer as fallow land, in actual fact the practice seems to be the partial

if they cultivate at all, their fields are usually half an acre or less, the minimum area consistent with their ideas of insurance against unemployment and old age.

Women comprise the majority of the non-cultivators and even those who do cultivate confine themselves to rice cultivation which gives a reasonable financial return, and, because it enables them to entertain, enhances their social position. In this industrial area a wife no longer expects her husband to maintain her in full either as an ideal or an obligation and such cultivation as she might undertake is an insurance

*Table V: Cultivation of annual crops (maize and cassava)*

		Married		Unmarried		Under 35 years old		Over 35 years old	
		Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
<i>Village A</i>									
Total Population .. ..	292								
Cultivating annual crop	191	66	78	10	37	33	43	43	71
Not cultivating at all ..	72	15	34	8	15	8	20	15	29
<i>Village B</i>									
Total Population .. ..	446								
Cultivating annual crop	259	122	55	43	39	74	32	91	62
Not cultivating at all ..	94	10	42	29	21	26	39	5	24
<i>Village C</i>									
Total Population .. ..	509								
Cultivating annual crop	118	36	22	49	11	23	14	62	19
Not cultivating at all ..	418	77	114	153	84	114	129	106	69

exhaustion of an area and then a complete move of the individual or family group to an uncut area under pretexts which may be unrelated to agriculture. Some idea of these moves can be gathered from the numbers of mango trees standing in areas which have no cultivation or village nearby. In the more densely occupied areas near the coast or round non-African estates the fallow area is regarded as waiting for planting up with coconuts rather than for a cycle of annual crops.

In Village 'C', dominated by nearby estates, the cultivation is done only by a minority comprising retired workers and the old and infirm. The majority work on the estates, permanently or intermittently and

against his improvidence rather than a contribution to their joint household. However, it would be naïve to imagine that, in a community comprising a majority of male migrant workers receiving regular pay at week-ends, agricultural work has any attraction either to unmarried women or to married ones, whose marriages are almost always short-lived.

The proportion of non-cultivators to cultivators of both sexes rises with proximity to estates until rights in land for annual crops become the concern of a minority of the inhabitants.

Both these specific rights in land and the general desire for sufficient land are maintained by a series of magical and social

sanctions. The burying of magical objects, with or without small thatched shelters over them, by the person having the principal rights over the area is believed to protect the cultivated land from thieves, who, however, are usually migrant labourers from nearby estates and thus free from the sanctions and obligations of kinship to which such magical activity is complementary.

Although a man may obtain his field through marriage, or a woman from her husband, it is only in the outlying areas that husbands and wives have any obligation to cultivate together. In the densely populated areas, although the harvest of their fields goes to the maintenance of the family, a man and his wife usually cultivate separately.

The provision of sufficient land therefore is the *sine qua non* of residence in any village and if this condition of residence is not fulfilled, he will leave and find a more co-operative neighbourhood elsewhere. If he is their agnate he will attach himself to other relatives elsewhere; or he may set himself up on his own. So ingrained is this idea that residence confers rights to land that migrant labourers whose stay is temporary will prefer a locality with land available for annual crops to one without.

The head of the smaller village and the elders of the larger ones have an obligation to provide sufficient land for all who come to the village, but, as there is no shortage of land for annual crops, they have no difficulty in providing it or telling the newcomer when it can be obtained. Such trouble as there is comes over individual long-term rights to land suitable for coconut palms.

A large part of the area is alienated for sisal estates and cattle ranching, but not so intensively as to deny to the villages sufficient land for expansion. The low birthrate which seems to be about 50 live children to a hundred adults precludes the need for large expansion areas which would otherwise have conflicted with the amount of alienation. These estates indeed have increased the demand for land in the neighbourhood because there is a ready market for produce

among their estate labour but this is balanced by the reduced size of the fields cultivated by those who work on the estate although living outside. There has been an artificial increase in the population of the whole area with large numbers of migrant workers coming to the estates who have not been interested in agriculture and it would be partly correct to state that this large amount of alienation has resulted in a drastic reduction of the areas under annual crops. The estate and the village both have their fringe of settlement surrounding them and in both cases this fringe is highly mobile so that land remains available for annual crops, while the wealthier men who move from the estate have no difficulty in finding land to plant up with coconut palms.

#### LAND WORKED FOR PERENNIAL CROPS (TABLE VI)

Most primary right holders have land under coconut palms or live in the hope of being able to borrow enough money to open up their fallow land; considering the value of palms and their slow maturity and long life, it is surprising how few landholders plant palm seedlings. Newcomers and salaried employees of the non-African estates are more active in starting plantations than permanent residents.

In Village 'A' considerable areas of coconut palms were sold or mortgaged and lost to Indians and Arabs in the early years of the century because of the demands of prestige expenditure over rites of passage, and today there is an absence of both money and stimulus to cause them to open up fallow land on the periphery of the village. The majority of palm land is held by the older age group on whom their heirs wait for inheritance. It is almost axiomatic that any quarrel between relatives is over inheritance, and the majority of coastal villagers are preoccupied with the possibility of inheriting rather than in working to acquire their own property.

In Village 'C' the over-riding attraction of nearby employment seems to have inhibited the cultivation of perennial crops and it is only in Village 'B', which strikes



a balance between the two extremes, that a large number of persons own coconut plantations. It should also be noted that here almost as large a number of women own palms as men, owing to the Islamic system of dividing property in predetermined fixed proportions between the heirs, and that in all three villages the older age group are the majority of palm owners.

Primary right holders would only object to a newcomer who plants palms without the customary process of acquiring land for perennial crops; as newcomers are unlikely to plant palms until they consider them-

if he considers that he has made an unconditional sale in which the buyer has obtained land rights in perpetuity. The fundamental idea may be that the vendor has given the buyer an area of land on which he may plant and maintain coconut palms indefinitely but the vendor cannot sell his position as a primary right holder. Although it is entirely hypothetical and is unlikely ever to happen, should the land become deserted, the family of the primary right holder, if they still existed, might be able to make a successful claim to re-occupy it.

Primary right holders hold no documen-

*Table VI: Cultivation of perennial crops (coconut palms)*

		Married		Unmarried		Under 35 years old		Over 35 years old	
		Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
<i>Village A</i>									
Total Population . . .	292								
Cultivating perennial crop	68	36	12	9	11	23	6	22	17
Not cultivating at all . .	72	15	34	6	15	8	20	15	29
<i>Village B</i>									
Total Population . . .	446								
Cultivating perennial crop	185	75	55	25	30	40	30	60	55
Not cultivating at all . .	94	10	42	29	21	26	39	5	24
<i>Village C</i>									
Total Population . . .	509								
Cultivating perennial crop	61	28	11	19	3	14	10	33	4
Not cultivating at all . .	418	77	109	148	84	114	129	106	69

selves permanently established in their village, there is little likelihood of conflict.

Purchase of land for coconuts from primary right holders seems to be done more by newcomers as they are more vigorous and usually earn more money than the average local man who anyway would have little need to buy land when he has his relatives and his own fallow land to take up: this is particularly noticeable in Village 'C' where the majority of palm owners have obtained their development money from working on the nearby estates. Primary right holders now are reluctant to sell, although considerable sales took place in the past.

Although in such a purchase money is received by the right holder, it is doubtful

title but if the land changes hands, a rough plan and title deed are usually completed, but land disputes which reach the Courts are very rare although boundaries are extremely irregular and unmarked except by specific palms.

Although the title in such plantations appears to be individually held, and this is a modern development, we must not be hurried into thinking their basic land rights have been drastically altered. The obligations which the cultivator had for annual crops are just as relevant for the produce of his palms, and it is doubtful if the owner in the majority of cases would be permitted to administer his land without the approval of his relatives. The individual title in

this area is no more than a cover for the continuation of previous land rights.

#### BOUNDARIES

The necessity of a generalized system of boundaries is dependent on administrative requirements and a highly individualized system of land holding. It is very doubtful whether boundaries existed in vacant land prior to European suzerainty, and the glib manner in which they are discussed and argued over now is a response to questions and insistence on them by a succession of European administrators. Even our word 'boundary' implies that two definite areas are contiguous rather than that it is the limit of one individual right.

Each village in this area is considered by the people themselves to be a genealogical unit and to be geographically isolated by a belt of land from its neighbours. This belt of land expands and contracts with population pressure just as the size of an individual's fields expands and contracts. They do not see this isolation as geographic but give it a kinship expression; thus the locally born men who lived in a village with a number of alien households referred to the other half of the village fifty yards away as another parish (*mtaa mwingine*) although geographically they were one small, closely built community. The two groups were not related, therefore, *ipso facto*, they must be widely separated.

At the most the border might be the physical limitation of one household's land in an area of close settlement and at the least a temporary division of fields during the cycle of their fertility. Politically boundaries may be a necessity, and both sides will argue long and hotly as to their correct location, but no matter how favourable the imposed settlement may be—and imposed it must be because no settlement could be reached except in the knowledge of potential force—neither party will accept the boundary as final because it would deny them the potential expansion on which their kinship system is based.

We can also see that a boundary must also run counter to the basic principles of

land rights; for, if the individual has a boundary given to him at any time, it denies him sufficient land should his family circumstances change, and at the same time it gives an exclusive right over some land independent of his communal obligations and his physical presence in the village.

The newcomer may be shown an area in which to cultivate but he will not be shown or given any boundaries if it is bush; if he is going to cultivate in another's coconut plantation, he may be shown the limits for his field; but the very fact that he has accepted clientship shows that he will be here for a short time and the holders might not even bother to limit him.

The cultivator will show the end of his fields (*mwisho wa mashamba*) but will only indicate a boundary (*mipaka ya shamba*) when his own and his neighbours' fields are in actual contact, since he will not think in terms of a boundary unless his rights are potentially menaced.

Villagers' attitudes to estate boundaries are based on the same principles in that there are few complaints about land which is occupied by sisal, but many about vacant land within the estate boundaries which they consider to be wrongfully denied them for their own expansion. Even in their own fallow land holdings it is essential to show signs of past active occupation in order to retain possession as against another claim.

In a discussion a villager will draw a circle in the sand with his finger to denote his family, but when he is asked to draw his boundaries he will draw a straight line, possibly passing through a known landmark, but beginning and ending in no known place. This seems to illustrate that the family is finite at any given moment but that boundaries represent localised agreements in particular places but elsewhere have not been defined.

#### CONCLUSION

Comparisons between the three sample areas show that there has been little change in the system of land rights in the last fifty years. Land continues to be principally



obtained by inheritance or by opening up new land, and buying and selling has made little headway. This appears to be because the opening up of extensive estates has been balanced by a pronounced reduction in the number of people who want to cultivate, and an equivalent reduction in the size of the fields of those who did cultivate.

Land use for subsistence agriculture is completely extinguished in areas dominated by estates, but the greatest use of land for both perennial and annual crops is in the area stimulated rather than dominated by estates.

There is no marked change-over in the

characteristics of cultivators except that in the areas near to estates the old of both sexes are compelled to cultivate to maintain themselves whereas they are not active field-workers in other areas.

Boundaries have only been acknowledged where the land of more than one person is adjacent, as their limitation runs counter to their basic principle of sufficient land for the needs of any cultivator.

The land and the trees on it may be considered separate entities, and, even under conditions of purchase and sale, it is possible that the land is not sold but only the right to cultivate it indefinitely.

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# THE EARLIEST RECORDS OF BANTU\*

C. M. DOKE

## I

It is very suggestive that the name given in ancient Egyptian records for the "land of the blacks", the almost mythical land to the far south of Egypt, should be *Punt*.<sup>1</sup> There is record of the "sacred country" as far far back as the reign of Sankh-ka-Ra, computed to be about 2500 B.C. Several Egyptologists agree in placing the commencement of Punt in the vicinity of the hinterland of the present Somaliland.<sup>2</sup> Probably it stretched far to the west and south of that. Judging from the fact that beyond Punt was the "Land of the Shades, where dwelt the Dangas", dwarfs or Bushmen, it is reasonable to suppose that Punt represented the country of the primitive Bantu, where they lived before their prolonged migrations commenced. The name is suggestive. Is it the first Bantu word ever recorded? In Egyptian *p* and *b* are not clearly distinguished. It is highly probable that *Punt* stands for **bunt(u)**, the land of the people, the Bantu. In Bantu -NTU is the oldest of the roots for "person". In Xhosa (Southernmost Bantu) is the term **uBuntu**, in Bemba (Central Bantu) it is **uBuntu**, and in Ganda (Northernmost Bantu) it appears as **obuntu**. In Ganda, **obuganda** signifies the country of the Ganda, and **obuntu**, the country of the people, the Bantu.

Hieroglyph of PUNT (PUANIT of Maspero)

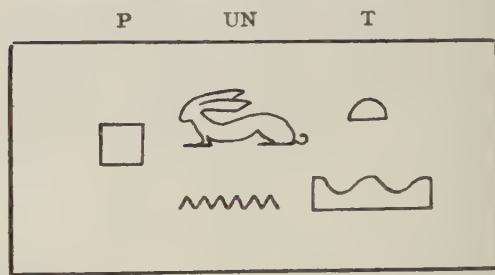


Figure in the lower right-hand corner is the determinative for "Country"

The evidence of Mas'ûdî, the Arab writer, in his "Golden Meadows" (*Murûğ ed-Dahab*) written about 956 A.D., is strongly in support of the Bantu being well to the north, and Punt being the land of the Bantu. He writes:<sup>3</sup>

"As we have said above, the Zing<sup>4</sup> with other Abyssinian tribes spread themselves to the right of the Nile, down to the extremity of the sea of Abyssinia. Of all the Abyssinian tribes the Zing were the only ones who crossed the canal which comes out of the Upper Nile (? Juba River). They established themselves in this country and spread themselves as far as Sofala, which is on the sea of the Zing the furthest limit whither ships sail from Oman and Siraf.

\* This is a revised version of a paper published in *Bantu Studies*, 12, 2, 1938. We regret that, for typographical reasons, we have not been able to reproduce here the Arabic script forms of various words quoted in the original. It has also been necessary to modify the romanized versions of several of these words and of the titles of Arabic works quoted. For the original forms, please refer to C. M. Doke: "The Earliest Records of Bantu", *Bantu Studies*, 12, 2, 1938; and *Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-sprachen*, 10, 1919-20, pp. 147 ff. [Ed.]

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion on Punt (*Puanit*) as connected with Swahili *pwani*, in which -*ni* is locative suffix on a root *pwa*, cf. *Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-sprachen*, Vol. XXXII, No. 4, articles: (i) C. Meinhof: "Pwani", and (ii) E. Zyhlarz: "Das Land Punt".

<sup>2</sup> e.g. H. Carter in *Tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen* (Vol. III, p. 141), speaks of the Land of Punt as "a country somewhere on the East Coast of Africa, north of the Equator, like Abyssinia or Somaliland".

<sup>3</sup> Maçoudi, *Les Prairies d'Or*. Texte et traduction par Barbier de Meynard et Pavet de Courteille. Paris, 1861-1877, vol. III, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> i.e. the Bantu.



For, as the Chinese sea ends at the land of Sila (? Japan), so the limits of the sea of the Zing are near the land of Sofala and that of the Wakwak (Hottentots and Bushmen), a country which yields gold in abundance with other marvels. There the Zing built their chief-town. Then they elected a king whom they called **Falime** (or **Wafalime**) . . . The territory of the Zing begins at the canal derived from the Upper Nile, and extends to the land of Sofala and that of the Wakwak."

## II

## ARABIC SOURCES

The earliest definite recordings of Bantu words come from Arabic sources, some of which date back to the early part of the 10th century. We are indebted to Professor Carl Meinhof for information upon these in an article entitled "Afrikanische Worte in Orientalischer Literatur".<sup>5</sup> It was Professor J. J. Hess of Zurich who pointed out the terms to Meinhof. Four such terms have been identified:

(i) The oldest recorded Bantu word for "God" appears in *al-Hamadānī Kitāb al-buldān* (p. 78), where it is stated that in "Zangijah" (the language of the "Zang", i.e. the Bantu) God is called **lmklwglw**. Hamadānī wrote in the year 902 A.D. Mas'ūdī in his *Murūḡ ed-Dahab* (III, 30) of the year 956 recorded the name as **mlknglw**, which he explains as "the great Lord", with other variations which occur as **mkljhlw** and **mkljhw**. In the principal edition of Mas'ūdī (Būlāq 1283, Vol. I, p. 188) the word reads **mklnglw**. Meinhof discusses the forms at some length, and, after agreeing with Hess that the initial **l** must be a mistake, reads **mklwglw** as **mukulugulu**, drawing comparisons with the present Zulu **unkulunkulu**.

(ii) The present day name for Zanzibar, **Unguja**, occurs in Jāqūt's "Geographical

Dictionary" (1228 A.D.) where we read: "**Langūjah** is a large island in the land of Zing, in which the seat of the Kings of Zing is situated". As Professor Meinhof points out, while Swahili has lost the initial **l**, the Nyamwezi still call Zanzibar **Lunguja**. The term Zanzibar was first used about 1326; it was originally Zangabâr, i.e. the Coast of the Zang or Bantu.

(iii) Mas'ūdī also uses the Bantu term for a species of yam. Of this Hess writes: "Mas'ūdī (III, 30) further states that the staple food of the Zing is **ḡurah**,<sup>6</sup> and **kilārī**,<sup>7</sup> which is taken from the earth like tuberous fungi, and **râsan** (*Inula helenium* L.). They are to be found plentifully in Aden and Yemen, and the **kilārī** resembles the *qulqās* of Egypt and Syria." Meinhof, in discussing this word, compares it with the Swahili **kiazi** (pl. **viazi**), sweet-potato, which is **murazi** in the Nyungwe of Tete, and with the Nyanja **chilazi**, yam.

(iv) The fourth word is recorded by Mas'ūdī as the word for "King". He states that the Zang use **wqljmj**. In the Būlāq edition it is given as **wqljmn** and described as meaning "Son of the great Lord". Meinhof connects this term with the Swahili **mfalme**.

## III

## PORTUGUESE SOURCES

Although the Portuguese must have first come in contact with the Bantu, when they crossed the equator in 1471, and although their earliest contacts were with the Bantu of the western coast south of the equator, the first recorded Bantu words which they have left us for over a century from that date come from the eastern coast of Africa. This is easily explained when it is remembered that the whole object of these early voyages was the establishment of contact with India, and the opposition of Arabs on the east coast necessitated the occupation of such places as Sofala, Kilwa and Mozambique by

<sup>5</sup> In the *Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-Sprachen*, Band X, pp. 147-152.

<sup>6</sup> i.e. sorghum, Kafir-corn.

<sup>7</sup> Or **kalārī**, or **kulārī**.

considerable forces. Added to this, the existence of gold mines in the interior, together with the reports of silver mines, led to repeated inland expeditions and the establishment of strong posts at Sena and Tete on the Zambesi, as well as the more isolated trading stations of Masapa, Bukoto and Luanze. All this occupation brought the Portuguese into much closer touch with the Natives on the east than on the west of Africa.

Prior to 1550 practically all the Bantu terms recorded in Portuguese sources<sup>8</sup> seem to be confined to place and personal names. There are references to "Monomotapa", "Zimbabwe", and the coastal towns of Sofala, Kilwa, Mozambique, etc., though these latter, Kilwa excepted, are hardly of Bantu origin.

Quite apart from the difficulties of varying and strange orthographies used by many of those who recorded Bantu words during the XVIth century, much was recorded by obviously illiterate or grossly careless writers. An interesting instance of this is found in a letter by Diogo d'Alcaçova to the King Dom Manuel on November 20th, 1506. This letter contains a report concerning Sofala, its trade, and the places in the interior from which gold is obtained—in the kingdom of **Vealanga**<sup>9</sup> (Karanga); also of the wars in that kingdom, with some observations upon Kilwa and Mombasa. In this letter Zimbabwe is referred to in two different ways, as **Zumubany** and as **Zunhauhy**, the title of the King is given as **Menamotapam**, while his name is written in no less than six distinct ways—**Quesarimngo**, **Quesarymgo**, **Quecarynugo**, **Quecarimugo**, **Queçarinuto**, **Queçarinugo**, and that of the previous king, his father, in two ways—

**Mocomba** and **Mocombo**. d'Alcaçova had been entrusted with a present of gold from the king of Sofala to Dom Manuel of Portugal, but owing to repeated severe attacks of fever he had been sent to India, whence he writes this letter, which he ends on a quaint personal note—"Sir, I pray your Highness to bear in mind what I have done, and that I possess nothing, and that I have five sons and daughters; and whereas I am serving Your Highness, that you will grant me the factory of Cananor, after Lopo Cabreyra has completed his term, or sooner, if he wishes to leave earlier, by which Your Highness will confer upon me a great favour".<sup>10</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

Duarte Barbosa,<sup>11</sup> in his *Livro em que dá relação do que viu e ouviu no Oriente*, which was completed in 1516, wrote "do regno de **Benametapa**", where he used the plural form, for both sections of the word; the word had not yet become stereotyped in the singular; later the Portuguese made a proper name of it. Elsewhere, as early as 1506, as already noted, the singular was recorded as **Menamotapam**.<sup>12</sup> Barbosa's rendering of Zimbabwe<sup>13</sup> was **Zimbaoche**, "in which", he says, "are many houses of wood and straw". Referring to language he says, "These Moors . . . speak Arabic, and the others use the language of the country, which is that of the heathens".

Afonso de Albuquerque, in a letter to the King from Goa, dated 25th October, 1514,<sup>14</sup> records the plural **Benamotapa**, with a singular of the second portion; while later, in 1552, de Barros wrote both **Benomotápa** and **Monomotápa**.

<sup>8</sup> A fruitful source for research in this connection is the volume of Portuguese Archives, entitled *Alguns Documentos do Archivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo acerca das Navegações e Conquistas Portuguezas, publicados por ordem do Governo de sua Magestade Fidelissima ao celebrar-se a commemoração quadricentenaria do descobrimento da America*. This consists of 555 foolscap pages of printed papers, lithographed copies of ancient documents and signatures of kings and princes. Published 1892.

<sup>9</sup> Is this a misinterpretation of the handwriting for Kalanga, by the publishers of the Archives?

<sup>10</sup> From the translation in G. M. Theal, *Records of South-eastern Africa*, Vol. I, p. 67.

<sup>11</sup> Theal, *Records of S.E.A.*, I, p. 85.

<sup>12</sup> Originally the word was evidently a title, **mñene-mutapo** (pl. **Bene-mitapo**), meaning "Owner or Lord of the mine(s)". **Mutapo** (or **umutapo**) is a Bantu word primarily indicating "metalliferous ore".

<sup>13</sup> **Zimba** in Karanga is augmentative of **imba** and means "big house"; locally it is **Zimbabge**, "palace of stone".

<sup>14</sup> Written by Antonio da Fomsequa; see Theal, *Records of S.E.A.*, III, p. 147.



De Barros<sup>15</sup> in his *Da Asia*, First Decade, 1552, writing of happenings said to have taken place about 740 A.D., made an interesting reference to what is probably the origin of the Swahili.

"The town of Magadaxo gained such power and state that it became the sovereign and head of all the Moors of this coast; but as the first tribe who came there, called Emozaýdy, held different opinions from the Arabs with regard to their creed, they would not submit to them, and retreated to the interior, where they joined the Kaffirs, intermarrying with them and adopting their customs, so that in every way they became mestizes. These are the people whom the Moors of the sea coast call Baduys, a common name; as in this country we call the country people Alarves."

His use of the term **Emozaýdy** is of extreme interest; this represented the tribe who followed Zaide. The recording of the Bantu prefixal form is further illustrated by a reference to the plural, given later, as **Omezaidos**. De Barros records Zimbabwe as **Symbaoe** (which would be near to the Manyika rendering, where **buwe** and **zihwe** occur in place of the Karanga **bge**), and gives **Symbacáyo** as "Keeper of the Zimbabwe"; he also records the word **Mozimo**<sup>16</sup> for God.

\* \* \* \* \*

The name of Father Gonçalves da Silveira will always be remembered in the annals of early Jesuit missionary enterprise in South-eastern Africa. Silveira landed at Sofala in 1560 and after but a short stay proceeded further north, up the Zambesi to Tete and further westward to the village of the "Monomotapa", where he was martyred on March 16th, 1561. In that short time he seriously studied both Tonga and

Karanga. In a letter of his addressed to the "Fathers and Brothers of the College at Goa"<sup>17</sup> he records the name of God as **Umbe**.<sup>18</sup> In an account "of the voyage of Father Dom Gonçalo to the Kingdom of Monomotapa and of his happy passing away",<sup>19</sup> compiled on the instructions of the Father Provincial from various witnesses in 1561, several Bantu words occur, including the following: **engangas**<sup>20</sup> "wizards, who cast lots with four sticks"; **morefos**<sup>21</sup> "nobles of the kingdom"; **moroo**<sup>22</sup> "wizard"; **encoces** "principal lord", which must be connected with the Nguni term **inkosi**, chief.

\* \* \* \* \*

In 1562 we find the earliest record of a complete Bantu sentence. The following is quoted from a letter from Father André Fernandez to the Brothers and Fathers of the Society of Jesus in Portugal, dated from Goa, 5th December 1562.<sup>23</sup> Dealing with Inhambane songs, Fernandez writes:

"Their songs are generally in praise of him to whom they are singing, as 'this is a good man, he gave me this or that, and will give me more.'

"Two songs are common in use among them, one is **Abenezaganbuia**, which means that the Portuguese eat many things at the same time, or many different dishes, for they never eat of more than one thing at a time, and they never eat and drink at the same time, not from temperance but from habit.

"The other song is: **Gombe zuco virato ambuze capana virato**, which means, the cow has leather for shoes and the goat has no leather for shoes; not because they wear shoes, for they all go barefoot unless the soles of their feet are sore, and they have to walk among prickly undergrowth, when

<sup>15</sup> Theal, *Records of S.E.A.*, VI.

<sup>16</sup> In Karanga **mudzimu** is really "spirit of a deceased person", but was used for some time by missionaries to indicate the Supreme Being, the Berlin Mission, with Sotho influence, even using the spelling **Modzimo**.  
<sup>17</sup> From Mozambique, 9th August, 1560; see Theal, *Records of S.E.A.*, II, p. 93.

<sup>18</sup> cf. Hlangane dialect **Ilumbe**.

<sup>19</sup> Theal, *Records of S.E.A.*, II, 116 *et seq.*

<sup>20</sup> cf. Shona **nganga**, diviner.

<sup>21</sup> cf. Shona **murefu**, a tall person.

<sup>22</sup> cf. Shona **muroyi**, wizard, witch.

<sup>23</sup> Theal *Records of S.E.A.*, II, 142.

they make soles of cow-hide and fasten them beneath their feet with straps."

The literal translation must be: "Cattle (plur.) have shōe-leather, goats no shoe-leather". The dialect which the sentence represents is uncertain; **gombe** is **gombe** in Sena, and **ambuze** is **mbuzi**; Sena would use **zina**, not **zuko** or **zuko**; **virato** cannot be Sena which uses the prefix **pi-** not **vi-**, but cf. Swahili **viatu**, shoes; **capana** is suggestive of the Swahili to Shona negative **hapana**.

\* \* \* \* \*

Father Monclaro's *Account of the Journey made by Fathers of the Company of Jesus with Francisco Barreto in the Conquest of Monomotapa in the year 1569*, which was written in 1572,<sup>24</sup> contains a number of Bantu words, among which may be noted the following: **fumos** "chiefs" (cf. **imfumu**); **Macuas** (Makua Natives); **murume** "a grain" (Sena); **simbo** "kerrie" (cf. Shona **tšimbo**); **Mulungo** "God"; **mutume** "ambassador" (Swahili); **Mozungwes**<sup>25</sup> "Portuguese"; as well as the sentence **Funga Muzungo** (Swahili), given as "bind the White man".

Some of the ship-wreck accounts contain Bantu words from various tribes, and a close study of these might help to determine the routes of travel of the survivors, as well as indicate tribal positions in the 16th century. From the "Wreck of the ship S. Thomè, on the Land of Fumos in the year 1589"<sup>26</sup> we get the terms **ancozes** for chiefs (cf. Nguni **inkosi**) and **fimbos** "fire-hardened sticks" (cf. Swahili **fimbo**, a stick). From the "Wreck of the Ship Santo Alberto, at the Rock of the Fountains, in the year 1593"<sup>27</sup> we get: **Nanhata**!, a

greeting (evidently heard in the region of Umtata); also **ancosses** for chiefs. The recorder observes, "The language is the same in nearly all Kaffraria, the difference being only like that between the different dialects of Italy and the ordinary dialects of Spain". The term **Inhancosa** is given as the "name of the chief's brother"; is this **unyana wenkosi**? Among other terms are **mambure** (melons), **manga** (sea), **sincoà** "millet cakes" (i.e. **isinkwa**). It is interesting to note the correct Nguni idiom in a chief's name given as **Mabomboru kaSobelo**.

Interesting interpretations are given by some of these chroniclers. For instance Fr. Joano dos Santos, who went to Sofala in 1586 and recorded some words, probably of the Teve dialect, in his "History of Eastern Ethiopia",<sup>28</sup> stated that **inhama**! signified "about to execute a person". This word, **inyama**, meaning "meat", was similarly recorded by Diogo de Couto in his *Da Asia*,<sup>29</sup> which appeared somewhat before 1616, as meaning "Here we have meat". De Couto further rightly explains that Tete is derived from **motete** meaning "reeds".

#### IV

##### PIGAFETTA

Here we turn to the first serious record from the Western Coast. Philipppo Pigafetta<sup>30</sup> an Italian, a prominent mathematician, wrote "A Report of the Kingdom of Congo" in Italian in 1591. In this work he quoted a considerable number of Kongo words<sup>31</sup> related to him by Odoardo Lopez<sup>32</sup> in 1588. These are of sufficient importance to deserve fairly close examination: many can be verified or corrected by modern Kongo.

<sup>24</sup> Theal, *Records of S.E.A.*, III, 202 *et seq.*

<sup>25</sup> This shows the early origin of **Muzungu**, the common East and Central African word for a European.

<sup>26</sup> Theal, *Records of S.E.A.*, II, 164 *et seq.*

<sup>27</sup> Theal, *Records of S.E.A.*, II, 283 *et seq.*

<sup>28</sup> From the *Portuguese Ethiopia Oriental*, 1609.

<sup>29</sup> cf. Theal, *Records of S.E.A.*, VI.

<sup>30</sup> Not to be confused with Antonio Pigafetta of Vicenza who travelled round the world with Magellan 1519-22.

<sup>31</sup> Our notes are taken from the 1745 reprint of Hartwell's 1597 translation. Hartwell says that Lopez made certain notes, "tumultuary papers of Lopez", and "unpremeditated speeches uttered by mouth at several times".

<sup>32</sup> Lopez was a Portuguese, born at Beneventum (24 miles from Lisbon). He sailed to Loanda in 1578 in the ship St. Anthony, belonging to an uncle, with merchandise.



He gives the Congo River its Native name of **Zaire**, which he explains as meaning "I know" (Ko. I know=**nze**ye, from vb. **zaya**); **Loanda** he says means "bald, shaven"; "town" is **libata** (Ko. **evata**); "banyan" **enzanda** (Ko. **nsanda**); "limpet, rock-fish" **ambiziamatare** (Ko. **mbiji a matadi**, rock fish); "dug-out canoe" **lungo** (Ko. **lungu**). Of **licondo** he writes, "a large timber tree: six men cannot compass it with their arms . . . one of them (canoes made from it) will carry about 200 persons"; this is the baobab (Ko. **nkondo**). The modern **mbiji a ngulu** appears as **ambize angulo** (hog-fish), "a kind of creature that hath, as it were, two hands, and a tail like a target". **Mani** he gives as "prince, lord, chief, governor", appearing in such compounds as **Mani-Bamba**, **Mani-Lemba**, **Mani-Danda**, **Mani-Loango**; while he gives the "name of a prominent king" as **Moënemugi** (both **mani** and **mwene** appear in the Ngola dialect of Ndongo). The Ovambo people are referred to as **Ambu**, while a Native of Congo is given as **Moci-Conghi** (Ko. **mwixi-Kongo**), but it is noteworthy that Lopez uses the singular as a plural, "the lords of the **Moci-Conghi**" (plur. is **exi-Kongo**). **Malo-manzao** is "foot of an elephant" (Ko. **malu**, legs, plur. of **kulu**; **ma nzau**, of elephant); similarly **mene-manzao** "tooth of an elephant" (Ko. **meno**, teeth plur. of **dino**), and **moana-manzao** "a young elephant" (Ko. **mwana**, child, young). Several animal names are given, as **engoi** "tyger" (Ko. **ngo**, leopard), **empalanga** "large antelope" (Ko. **mpalanga** ?kudu), **incire** "sable, weasel", **empacha** "beast from which shields are made, less than ox, horn like goat" (?Ko. **mpakasa**, buffalo). **Tombocado** is "one degraded from his position" (Ko. **tomboka**, be disembarked; but cf. Portuguese **tombo**, a tumble, fall). It is interesting to find at this early date, in the word **mazza** "maize", that the word has already become a current

borrowing from the Portuguese **maiz** (Ko. **masa**).

The Bantu prefix system for differentiating singular and plural was not recognised by Pigafetta (or Lopez), as the following quotation shows:

"The Latin History of the Indies . . . the book is faulty, in the name of the people that rebelled, for it calls them **Mundiqueti** whereas indeed the Portuguese rightly term them **Anziqueti**."<sup>33</sup>

The first use of the term **Mbulamatari**, used regularly to-day to indicate the Belgians and Portuguese, occurs in Pigafetta's "Report", where he refers to "Francesco Bullamatare-catche-stone" (Ko. **bula**, split open, **matadi**, rock) and adds an interesting story.<sup>34</sup>

His remarks on language might be noted. Speaking of the Anzichi, he says:<sup>35</sup> "Their language is altogether different from the language of Congo; and yet the Anzichi will learn the language of Congo, very soon and easily, because it is the plainer tongue; but the people of Congo very hardly learn the language of the Anzichi . . ."

And later:<sup>36</sup> "The language of the people of Angola is all one with that of the people of Congo, because, as we told you before, they are both but one Kingdom. The only difference between them is, as commonly it is between two nations that border one upon another, as for example between the Portuguese and the Castilians, or rather between the Venetians and the Calabrians, who pronouncing their words in a different manner, and uttering them in several sorts, although it be all one speech, yet do they very hardly understand one another."

## V

### TWO ENGLISH SOURCES

At the end of the 16th century an Englishman, Andrew Battel of Leigh in Essex, was captured by the Portuguese and sent a

<sup>33</sup> Part II, Chapter II.

<sup>34</sup> Part II, Chapter IV.

<sup>35</sup> Part I, Chapter V.

<sup>36</sup> Part I, Chapter VII.

prisoner to Angola, where he lived and roamed with Native tribes for about eighteen years from 1589. The account of his "strange adventures" was given in 1610, after his return to England. From this account, apart from place and personal names, I have extracted over forty Bantu words, including one complete sentence; these words represent Ndongo ("Kimbundu"), Kongo and Longo. The orthography is strange and inconsistent, for instance a certain "large tree yielding water" is variously given as **alicondo**, **alicunde** and **elicandy**. The name for "God" is put down in one place as **Sambee**, in another as **Pango** (cf. **Nzambi-ampungu**). Among the words might be noted **ganga** (priest), **mani** (chief, lord), **pongo** (gorilla), **engeco** (?chimpanzee), **emboa** (dog), **masanga** (spec. of grain), **masimpota** (guinea-wheat). The sentence he records is, **Emeno eyge bembet Maramba**, "I come to be tried, O Maramba!" This is very difficult to identify; the first two words in Ndongo would be **Eme ngeza**; **bembet**, a strange

form, I cannot trace; **Maramba** is a correct vocative. While Battel's words are interesting they are of little philological value, as the dialects are mixed and the orthography too unreliable.

Another record, of little value, except that it gives the earliest words in a Comoro dialect, is that of Thomas Herbert, whose travels took place from 1626 onwards. In his book *Some Years Travels into Divers Parts of Africa and Asia the Great*, writing of the language of Mohelia,<sup>37</sup> one of the Comoro Islands, he states: "Some fragments of their language I took so well as I could from their own Idiom. A King is **Sultan**, Bracelets **Arembo**, a Hen **Coquo**, an Ox **Gumbey**, Coco-nuts **Sejavoye**, Plantains **Figo**, a Goat **Buze**, an Orange **Tudah**, a Lemon **Demon**, Water **Mage**, Paper **Cartassa**, a Needle **Sinzano**, etc., a mish-mash of Arabick and Portuguese."

And this exhausts the English contribution to Bantu language studies almost up to the end of the 18th century!

<sup>37</sup> Quotation from the fourth impression (with additions by the author still living), 1677, page 27; the words do not seem to have been published in his first edition of 1634.



# THE PARTICLE IN BORAN

ERIC J. WEBSTER\*

Boran is one of the Galla languages spoken over a wide area of Abyssinia and in most of the Northern Frontier Province of Kenya, including the Tana River District. Galla is included in the Cushitic group of the Hamito-Semitic family of languages. Pure Boran is spoken in southern Abyssinia around Mega and Neghelli and in the Marsabit district of northern Kenya where the Boran tribe lives. It is also the language of the Gabbra tribe to the west of Marsabit, and of the Gari around Mandera on the N.E. boundary of Kenya's Northern Frontier with Somaliland and Abyssinia, though these two tribes of course call their language Gabbra and Gari respectively. There is also a vast Galla-speaking area right across Abyssinia, each dialect varying with the tribe. North of Neghelli and on the Tana River in Kenya both the tribe and language are called Oromo; one of the Galla group which is perhaps nearest to Boran. In spite of the vast distance between southern Abyssinia and the Tana River, it is quite possible to use the Boran language in both areas and be understood. The various languages and dialects of the Galla group vary amazingly little over an area covering thousands of

miles and in a country where communications are difficult.

\* \* \* \* \*

If we accept the definition of a particle as a part of speech that by itself has no meaning, the Boran<sup>1</sup> particles number probably under twenty. Some of these are wide in their application and play an important part in the structure of the language.

The majority of the particles are used as suffixes; two, that act as auxiliaries to the verb, are prefixes. Let us take the auxiliary prefixes first.

## PREFIXES

These are: **in-**<sup>2</sup> and **yā-** (alternatively **lā-**).

### 1. **in-** of Intention or Strong Assertion

(a) **in-** is prefixed to the indicative of the verb to denote *intention* or *strong assertion*, as distinct from plain statement of fact or simple future, and operates in all persons and in all tenses except the perfect, e.g.

**dēma**<sup>3</sup> (go)

**āni indēma**<sup>4</sup> (I will go, I intend to go)

**āti indēmta** (You shall go—whether

\* Canon E. J. Webster is an Anglican clergyman and a Canon of the Diocese of Mombasa who is at present Chaplain to the Kenya Prisons Department. From 1931–40 and again from 1947–55 he served as a missionary of the Anglican Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society amongst the Boran tribe at Marsabit in the Northern Frontier of Kenya. From 1940–47 Canon Webster served as a Chaplain to the Forces in the E.A. Section of the R.A.Ch.D. and spent most of 1941 in Abyssinia, when he was able to use his knowledge of Boran from Jijiga (north of the Ogaden in Somaliland) through Harar and Dire Dawa to Addis Ababa where the Boran were not known even by name.

<sup>1</sup> For information about this dialect of the Galla Language see M. A. Bryan, *The Distribution of the Semitic and Cushitic Languages of Africa*, Oxford University Press for International African Institute, 1947. My system of spelling here is identical with that of M. M. Moreno, *Grammatica Teorico-Pratica della Lingua Galla*, Rome (Mondadori), 1939, except that I use **c**, **ç**, **d** with cedilla, **j** and **ny** instead of Moreno's **c** with wedge (inverted circumflex), **c** with wedge and subscript dot, **d** with subscript dot, **g** with wedge, and **n** with tilde, respectively.

<sup>2</sup> **in-** has an alternative form **hin-**, which occurs particularly often in the initial position.

<sup>3</sup> Unless otherwise stated, all verbs are given in the 1st person singular of the present/future indicative, but the personal pronoun cannot be used along with this unless the verb has the prefix. For instance, one cannot say, **ani kenna** or **ani dema**. If, however, an object or adverb is used as well, the pronoun may be used, e.g. **ani si kenna** (I will give (it) to you); **ani bóri dēma** (I shall go tomorrow).

<sup>4</sup> With verbs such as **jíra** (be, exist) and **qába** (have) whose meanings are usually confined to the present, **ínjira** and **ínqaba** would mean respectively in the 3rd p. s., "it *is*", and "it *has*" (i.e. possesses).

you like it or not, nothing shall stop you)

(b) **in-** is also used as a prefix to all negative verbs, in all moods and tenses, e.g.

#### *Indicative*

Present: **án(i)**<sup>5</sup> **indēmū** (I shall not or will not go)

Past: **indēmne** (did not go, has not gone—for all persons, with the appropriate pronoun)

#### *Negative Subjunctive*

**áka ini indēmne** (in order that he may or might not go—for all persons, with the appropriate pronoun)

#### *Negative Imperative*

**indēmína** (Do not go!—pl.)

## 2. **yā-** (or **lā-**)<sup>6</sup> of the Perfect Tense

**yā-** is prefixed to all persons of the indicative past tense to form the indicative perfect tense, e.g.

**dēme** (went)

**ini yādēme** (He has gone, or, He has been)

**nū yādēmne** (We have been)

## INDEPENDENT PARTICLES

Before going on to suffixes, notice might be made here of **ka**<sup>7</sup> (masc.) and **ta** (fem.), normally used for the English preposition "of" (possessive), which is really neither a prefix nor a suffix.

This is used in the 3rd p., sing. and pl., along with the genitive case for predicative (sometimes called disjunctive or absolute) pronouns, that is, when the pronoun is the predicate of a sentence,<sup>8</sup> e.g.

Ordinary Possessive (Genitive case)

**máni isā dānsa** (His house is good)

**ani ūle isī arga** (I see her stick)  
**farda gurbā** (The boy's horse)

but predicatively

**máni ka isā** (The house is his)

**ūlēni<sup>9</sup> ta intalā** (The stick is the girl's)

**fārdi ka gurbā** (The horse is the boy's)

## SUFFIXES

The suffixal particles in common use are the following:

A. Prepositional Particles

B. Adverbial Particles

C. Conjunctional Particles

We take these in order and consider examples of the different types.

### A. PREPOSITIONAL PARTICLES

These are:

**-ti** (to)

**-fi<sup>9</sup>** (for, on behalf of, on account of)

**-ni<sup>9</sup>** (with)

**-ti** (at, in)

It will be seen that these are really case suffixes; though not all the cases are indicated by a suffix. The accusative (which is the basic form of the oblique cases from which all the others are formed), the genitive, an alternative second dative (for), and a second ablative (from), take no suffix; of these all but the accusative lengthen their final vowel. It should be noted that the nominative of most nouns ends in **-ni<sup>9</sup>** and should be distinguished from the ablative above.

#### 1. Dative **-ti** (to)

This is used with an indirect object in the sense of "to".

**nátí<sup>10</sup> kénni** (Give (it) to me)

**gurbát(i)<sup>11</sup> hīmi** (Tell the boy)

<sup>5</sup> These indeterminate final **i**'s shown in brackets (**i**), are elided before a vowel or **h** (which is not pronounced before a consonant). The pronoun and the verb can be run together, **ánindēmū**.

<sup>6</sup> These seem to be entirely interchangeable and **lā** can be read for **yā** throughout.

<sup>7</sup> This is identical with the relative pronoun, and it is possible that it is a disguised relative in this connection (as there is a genitive possessive case without any particle). **Fārdi ka gurbā** may mean "The horse which (is) the boy's".

<sup>8</sup> When the verb is a copulative and refers to *state* as distinct from *place* it is not expressed; the predicate (when a noun, pronoun or adjective) is put into the accusative form and does not therefore agree with its subject in case, as it would in English.

<sup>9</sup> The final **i** here is indeterminate.

<sup>10</sup> This suggests passing something to me as distinct from giving it to me to keep; sometimes abbrev. to **na kénni**.

<sup>11</sup> The **i** is elided and the **h** is not pronounced.



2. *Dative -f(i)* (*for, on behalf of*)

This is also used with an indirect object in the sense of "for".

**ani isâf(i) tôlece** (I did it for him)

**tanâf(i)** (therefore—lit., on account of this)

When this particle is used, as it often is, without any expressed indirect object, an indirect object, usually to be understood from the context, is to be inferred. Frequently two indirect objects are to be inferred, e.g.

**ságale kennîf(i)** (Give (him, etc.) food for (me, him, etc.))

**înkennâf(i)** (I will give (food, to him, etc.) for (you, etc.))

3. *Ablative of agent -n(i)* (*with*)

**ini ûlên(i) na dâe** (He struck me with a stick)

**ûlên(i) kôti** or **ûle kôtin(i)** (Bring the stick—lit., Come with the stick)

Note that when one takes or uses something **-ni** is the proper particle to use (as in the above examples), but if it is a matter of doing something *along with* someone, as of equal partnership, **wôlini** (**wôli**, each the other, and **-ni**) is used.

**Nu wôlin(i) dêmne** (We went together)

If I say, **ani fardâni dême** (I went with the horse), I imply that I mounted it and used it to take me. If I say **ani fârda wôlini dême**, I imply that I led it; each of us went on his own legs.

4. *Locative -ti* (*at, in*)

**ani ûle manât(i) ârge** (I saw the stick at the house)

**ini ûle manâti lakise** (He left the stick at the house)

What has been said above about the suffixing of all these prepositional particles to nouns applies in the same way to noun phrases or noun clauses. The particle comes at the end of the phrase or clause, e.g.

**gurba kanât(i) hîmi** (Tell this boy)

**ini ûlê guddô tanân(i) na dâe** (He struck me with this big stick)

**ani ûle mana kêsâti lakise** (I left the stick in the house)

**ani intala<sup>12</sup> kâle duffêt hîme** (I told the girl who came yesterday)

It is common to find a combination of both the dative and ablative particles, suffixed in this order, attached to the indirect object, or to an adverb, e.g.

**ûlên(i) kôti** (Bring the stick) becomes

**ûle nâtin(i) kôti** (Bring the stick to me)

One could also say, **ûle nâ kôtîni** (Bring me the stick).

This would connote bringing it to me for my use, whereas **nâtin(i) kôti** might suggest that I was merely to take charge of the stick on behalf of its owner.

**ûle ârmâtin(i) kôti** (Bring the stick here)

## B. ADVERBIAL PARTICLES

These are:

**-le** (also, even)

**-niti** (**-miti**)<sup>13</sup> (not)

**-yû?** (not?—in questions only)

**-uma** (only, but)

**-ti, -tû** (emphatic)

**-yi** (persuasive)

**-fa** (indefinite)

1. *The Inclusive Particle -le* (*also*)

This can be suffixed to any other part of speech as follows:

(a) *To Nouns and Pronouns*

(i) *In the Nominative*

Where the noun is one that changes its final **-a** of the accusative to **-i** or to **-ti** to form its nominative, the particle is suffixed to this nominative form and then takes a final nominative suffix **-n(i)**, e.g.

**mani-lê-n(i) înjiga** (The house also will fall)

**intalti-lê-n(i) yâdêmte** (The girl also has gone (been))

All pronouns are of this kind:

**ani-lê-n(i)** (I also)

**nû-lê-n(i)** (we also)

**kûni-lê-n(i)** (this also)

In the instance of nouns that make their nominative by suffixing **-n(i)** to the accusative form, the **-le** is attached to the accusa-

<sup>12</sup> There is a relative pronoun **ta** (f) here understood.

<sup>13</sup> The **niti** and **miti** seem to be entirely interchangeable, and **miti** can be used for **niti** throughout.

tive and then takes a final nominative suffix **-n(i)**, e.g.

**ülē-lē-n(i) yāçabde** (The stick also has broken)

(ii) *In the Accusative*

The particle is simply suffixed to the accusative form of the noun or pronoun.

**qōrsále ímfeða**<sup>14</sup> (I do want medicine also)

**kanále fûḍi** (Take this also)

(iii) *In the other Oblique Cases*

The **-le** precedes the normal case-ending suffixes (see A. Prepositional Particles, above), e.g.

**ani si-lē-t(i) hime** (I told you also)

**ani ule mana-lē-t(i) arge** (I saw the stick at the house also)

**ini ülē tana-lē-n(i) na ḍáe** (He struck me with this stick also)

Where the case is indicated by a lengthening of the final vowel, instead of by a particle suffix, as in the genitive, the alternative second dative and the second ablative, the **-le** is also lengthened, e.g.

**nūlē gálci** (Bring (some) back for us also)

**sīlē ínkenna** (I will give to you also)

**ini manālē báhe** (He came out from the house also)

(b) *To Verbs*

The **-le** must be understood to qualify that particular verb to which it is suffixed.

Indic.: **ani índēmále** (I shall also go —not merely talk of going—my intention shall be fulfilled)

Note the difference between this and

**ánilēni índēma** (I also shall go)

Infín.: **ani dēmüle ímfeða** (I want also to go)

Subj.: **áka áni dēmüle na qárqāri** (Help me that I may also go)

Condit.: **yō dēmtele inárgitu** (Even though you go, you won't see (it))

**yō** (if) with **-le** is equivalent to "though", thus **yō . . . -le** (after the verb).

**-le** is also used in conjunction with **-ti**, along with the appropriate verb and person in the subjunctive, to express "whether" in a past or present sense.

**ini ḡufūlēti animbēkhū** (Whether he has come or not I do not know)

**isini qabḡulēti animbēkhu** (Whether she has any or not, I do not know)

The first of these examples might mean "Whether he will come or not . . .", but **aka ini ḡufū . . .** "Whether he may come . . ." (future subjunct.) is more common for the future.

(c) *To Other Parts of Speech*

Adjectives, adverbs and prepositions may similarly take the **-le** suffix, but the ruling is simple, and sufficient instances have been given of its use to render further detailed examples unnecessary.

2. *The Negative Particles -niti (-miti) (not) and -yū? (not?)*

The ordinary negative form of the verb has been shown in examples under prefixes, 1 (b), but the negative particle **-niti** is a most useful adjunct that can be used with any other part of speech. Its function is to change a positive into a negative.

(a) *With Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives, Prepositions and Adverbs*

The use of **-niti** is simple, and one example of each of the above will suffice:

(i) *In Statements*

**náma** (man > **namāniti** (not a man)

**kána** (this > **kanāniti** (not this)

**dánsa** (good) > **dansāniti** (not good)

**kēsa** (inside) > **kēsāniti** (not inside)

**ḡuddō** (greatly, much) > **ḡuddōniti** (not greatly, not much)

Note the transfer of the stress to the syllable preceding the suffix.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The **in-** prefix becomes **im-** before the labials **b**, **f** and **m**.

<sup>15</sup> It should be noted that in all cases where this negative suffix is used, the final vowel of the positive, to which the suffix is attached, is lengthened and also takes the stress. It is important to realise the implications of this, as in certain words ending in an indeterminate **i**, shown as (**i**) [(mainly the "neuter" class of noun covering words like **bisan(i)** (water); **ānan(i)** (milk), etc., and the 2nd and 3rd p. pl. pronouns, as well as one or two of the prepositional particles)] there is a danger of disregarding the final **-i** altogether, as it is very faint and often very difficult to hear. The importance of noticing it (however faintly it may be pronounced) is evident when one comes to the use of the negative or indeed of any other suffix with such words, e.g. **bisani**; **bisaniniti**.



(ii) *In Questions*

By raising the tone of the penultimate syllable, the statement can be presented in the form of a negative question, expecting the answer "yes". The statement, as it were, is first made, then the question asked, e.g.

**nam.ānīti?** ( - - - - ) (It is a man, isn't it?)

**kanānīti?** ( - - - - ) (It is this, isn't it?)

**dansānīti?** ( - - - - ) (It is good, isn't it?)

**kēsānīti?** ( - - - - ) (It is inside, isn't it?)

**guddōnīti?** ( - - - - ) (It is very much, isn't it?)

**-yū** is used in the same way, except that this is naturally an interrogative, and it is therefore not necessary to raise the tone to imply a question. Sometimes it is raised a little.

**namāyū?** ( - - - ) or ( - - - ) (Is it not a man?)

It should be noted that whilst the negative particles cannot be suffixed to a noun in the nominative case, they can be used with any other case, and come, unlike the particle **-le**, after the appropriate prepositional suffix, e.g.

**mana kēsāti** (at or in the house)

**mana kēsātīniti** (not at or in the house)

(b) *With Verbs*(i) *Positive in form but with Negative Implication*

Between the positive statement, **ani**

**(ati) indēmtānīti?** ( - - - - - )  
**(ati) indēmtāyū?** ( - - - - - )  
 or ( - - - - - ) } (You will go, won't you?)

**(isani) indēmānīnīti?** ( - - - - - )  
**(isani) indēmānīyū?** ( - - - - - )  
 or ( - - - - - ) } (They will go, won't they?)

This same construction can be used in the past and perfect tenses, in the sense of,

"You did go, didn't you?": **indēmtēnīti? indēmtēyū?** or

"You have been, haven't you?": **lā-dēmtēnīti? ladēmtēyū?**

**imbēkha** (I know), and the negative statement, **animbēkhū** (I do not know), there is a third form, compounded of the positive verb and the negative suffix, **an(i) imbēkhāniti**.

This is not asked as a question, but it carries the force of "What do I know (about it)?—Nothing." It sometimes replaces the perhaps more common **ani imbēkha?** (Do I know?) or **ani māl(i) bēkha?** (What do I know?), though one often hears **ani māl(i) bēkhāniti**, not couched as a question and with no tone-raising, and meaning "I know nothing at all about it".

(ii) *In Questions, with the verb in the Affirmative*

As **-niti** can be used in asking questions when the answer expected is "Yes" with other parts of speech (see B 2 (ii) above, so with any positive verb. Let us take an example of an ordinary open question, to which the answer may be yes or no. Questions are normally asked in Boran by raising the tone of the voice, so that a statement becomes a question without any grammatical adjustment, e.g.

**(ati)<sup>16</sup> indēmta** ( - - - ) (You will go) becomes **(ati) indēmta?** ( - - - ) (Will you go? Are you going? Do you intend to go?) The answer to this may be either in the affirmative or negative.

To change this into a sort of "negative" question, expecting an answer in the affirmative, the particle **-niti** or **-yū** is suffixed, thus:

This can be applied to any person of the verb in the same way.

(iii) *In Questions, with the verb in the Negative*

To ask a question with a negative verb, expecting the answer "no", **-yū** is suffixed.

*Present/Future:* **at(i) indēmtū** (You

<sup>16</sup> The pronoun here could be omitted as there is no possibility of ambiguity in the 2nd p. of the verb in this tense.

are not going) becomes **at(i) indē-mtūyū?** (- - -) (You are not going, are you?)

*Past:* **at(i) indēmnēyū?** (- - -) or (- - -) (You didn't go, did you? You haven't been, have you?)

### 3. The Limiting Particle **-uma** (only)

The particle **-uma** has a wide use and can be suffixed to any Noun or Pronoun, Predicative Adjective and Adverb, as well as to the Verb Prefix, Verb Stem and to the Infinitive. Its function is to *emphasise the meaning of a word by limiting its scope and application*. It carries the force of "only", "entirely", "nothing but".

The final vowel of the word it is required to emphasise (be it **a**, **e**, **i**, **o**, or **u**) is dropped and the **-uma** suffixed, e.g.

**dānsa** (good) > **dānsuma** (entirely good)

**būyō** (grass) > **būyuma** (nothing but grass)

Perhaps a few examples of its use with the different parts of speech, both without the **-uma** particle and with it, will help to make the function of the particle clear.

(a) *With a Noun or Pronoun alone* (i.e. without any adjective)

(i) *In the Accusative*

**isin(i) ijôle**<sup>17</sup> (She is a child)

**isin(i) ijôluma** (She is but a child)

**ani mána arga** (I see a house)

**ani mánuma arga** (I see only a house)

**ani kána feḍa** (I want this)

**ani kánuma feḍa** (I want none but this)

**ḥúfa fūḍi** (Bring (it) all)

**ḥúfuma fūḍi** (Bring absolutely all)

(ii) *In the Nominative*

In order to emphasize the subject of a sentence when the verb is in the Imperative or Conditional<sup>18</sup> the **-uma** is suffixed to the nominative form, which then takes the additional nominative suffix **-ni**.

### *Imperative*

**átumāni tólci** (You do it)

**hâ inumāni tólci** (Let him do it)

### *Conditional*

**Yō anumāni tólce** . . . (If I do it . . .)

**Yō manumāni jige** . . . (If the house falls . . .)

(b) *With a Noun used along with an Adjective or Preposition*

When a noun is used with an adjective or preposition, it is the *noun* that takes the suffix, even though the emphasis covers the adjective or preposition as well, e.g.

**ḡuya ḥúfa kôti** (Come every day)

cf. **ḡuyuma ḥúfa kôti** (Come every day)

**mána kēsa bārbādi** (Search in the house)

cf. **mánuma kēsa bārbādi** (Search only in the house)

*Note.*—The noun is frequently to be understood, not being expressed. In such instances, the particle is suffixed to the preposition: **kēsuma bārbādi** (Search inside only). This could, however, be considered here to be (as it indeed often is) a noun in itself—"Search the inside only".

(c) *With a Predicative Adjective or Pronoun*

When the adjective or pronoun is predicative, it is the adjective or pronoun that takes the **-uma** suffix as that is what it is required to stress.

### *Adjective*

Ordinary: **ani fáya** (I am well)

Emphatic: **ani fáyuma** (I am absolutely well)

*Pronoun* (1st p. only) (for 2nd & 3rd pp. see 4 (a))

Ordinary: **máni kfiya** (The house is mine)

Emphatic: **mani kfiyuma** (The house is mine (and no-one else's))

**harrēni tēna** (The donkey is ours)

**harrēni tēnuma** (The donkey is ours)

Often the word **dānsa** is used to cover a wealth of meaning. To the question, **dānsa?**

<sup>17</sup> See note 6.

<sup>18</sup> The subject of a sentence with the verb in the indicative is emphasized differently, without **-uma**; see § 4 (ii), page 40.



(Is everything all right?—the subject being understood), the reply, **dánsuma** (Everything is perfectly all right), is very common.

(d) *With an Adverb*

This is straightforward and simple.

**ini lāna dēma** (He goes carefully)

**ini lānuma dēma** (He goes very carefully)

**ani gúddō féða** (I like (it) very much)

**ani gúdduma féða** (I like (it) very much indeed)

(e) *With a Verb*

As we have already seen, **-uma** can be used with the verb in three ways:

(i) *Along with the Verb Prefix.*

The use of the particle **in-** as a prefix has already been dealt with under Prefixes. This can be combined with the particle **-uma** in order to give additional emphasis. The verbal prefix then becomes **inuma** (sometimes contracted to **inū**) throughout all persons.

*Present/Future/Indic.*

I shall, you will, etc.

I ( <b>ani</b> )	<b>dēma</b>
You ( <b>ati</b> )	<b>dēm̄ta</b>
He ( <b>ini</b> )	<b>dēma</b>
She ( <b>isini</b> )	<b>dēm̄ti</b>
We ( <b>nu</b> )	<b>dēm̄na</b>
You ( <b>issani</b> )	<b>dēm̄tani</b>
They ( <b>isāni</b> )	<b>dēm̄ani</b>

(ii) *Along with the Verb Stem*

**-uma** is suffixed to the verb stem and used along with the appropriate person of the same verb (in the Indicative past tense) to denote *intensiveness or concentrated and sustained past effort*, e.g.

**ini dēmuma<sup>19</sup> dēme** (He kept on going)

**isāni tōlcuma tōlcani** (They kept on doing it)

The idea behind it is that the subject is limited to the action of the verb in question to the exclusion of all other effort or action.

The following examples will show the use of the two particles together.

*Normal Present Indic.:* **ani hárre tána féða** (I want this donkey)

*Assertion:* **ani hárre tána ímfeða** (I do want this donkey)

*Emphatic Assertion:* **ani hárre tána ínuma** (or **inū**) **féða** (I certainly do want this donkey)

Note that whilst the prefix **in-** cannot stand alone and must be joined to the verb stem, when the **in-** and the **-uma** are combined, the new form should not be joined to the verb, as it is often brought forward in the sentence and made to precede the object in order to give yet further emphasis, e.g. **ani ínuma hárre tána féða** (I most certainly do want this donkey).

In order to show the force of the particles, a comparison between the ordinary Present/Future Indicative and the Present/Future Intention or Assertion is set out.

*Present/Future Intention*

I will (shall certainly);

You shall (will certainly); etc.

<b>índēma, ínuma dēma</b> or <b>inū dēma</b>
<b>índēmta, ínuma dēm̄ta</b> or <b>inū dēm̄ta</b>
<b>índēma, ínuma dēma</b> or <b>inū dēma</b>
<b>índēm̄ti, ínuma dēm̄ti</b> or <b>inū dēm̄ti</b>
<b>índēm̄na, ínuma dēm̄na</b> or <b>inū dēm̄na</b>
<b>índēm̄tani, ínuma dēm̄tani</b> or <b>inū dēm̄tani</b>
<b>índēm̄ani, ínuma dēm̄ani</b> or <b>inū dēm̄ani</b>

(iii) *Along with the Infinitive*

The use of **-uma** to stress the Infinitive is quite common, e.g.

**ani dēmū male<sup>20</sup>** (I ought to go)

**ani dēmuma male** (I ought to go (as opposed to not going))

4. *The Emphatic Particles -ti and -tū*

(a) *With Nouns, etc.*

(i) *In the Possessive*

Examples of how to emphasize the object of a sentence have been given under 3 (a), and the 1st *p.* Possessive and 1st *p.* Pre-

<sup>19</sup> This may be an emphatic gerund, formed in the usual way from the ordinary gerund, **dēma**, used as a cognate object.

<sup>20</sup> This verb **male** is wanting in the present tense.

dicative Pronoun under 3 (c), but the 3rd p. Possessive Predicative Pronoun makes its emphatic with the use of the relative pronoun **ka** (masc.), **ta** (fem.) or particle "of" (see Particle "of"), and the particle **-ti**, e.g.

*Ordinary non-emphatic*

**mani ka isā** (The house is his)  
**fardi ka gurbā** (The horse is the boy's)  
**ūlēni ta intalā** (The stick is the girl's)  
**ānani ka isānī** (The milk is theirs)  
**hórini ka wórā kanā** (The stock belongs to these people)

*Emphatic Predicative Pronoun*

**mani ka isāti** (The house is *his*)  
**fardi ka gurbāti** (The horse is *the boy's*)  
**ūlēni ta intalāti** (The stick is *the girl's*)  
**ānani ka isanīti** (The milk is *theirs*)  
**hórini ka wórā kanāti** (The stock belongs to *these people*)

(ii) *As Subject of a Sentence*

Examples of how to emphasize the subject of a sentence when used with an Imperative or Conditional have been given under 3 (a). To emphasize the subject of a sentence that has its verb in the Positive Indicative, the subject is put into the objective case and the 3rd p. masc. sing. of the verb is used irrespective of the gender or number of the subject, e.g.

**āni imfeḍa** (I want (it)) > **aná<sup>21</sup> feḍa**  
 (I want (it))  
**isini imfeti** (She wants (it)) > **isi feḍa**  
 (She wants (it))  
**ārbī inḥabse** (The elephant broke (it))  
 > **arbā ḥabse** (The elephant broke (it))

It is also common to suffix the particle **-ti**, or **-tū** (which is a little stronger than **-ti**), as follows:

**anātū feḍa** (I want it)  
**isītū feḍa** (She wants it)  
**arbāti ḥabse** (The elephant broke it)

When the subject comes into proximity with a verb that begins with a vowel, the particle **-ti** or **-tū** is essential; though in

the case of **-ti** the vowel is elided, whilst the **-ū** of **-tū** is not, e.g.

**anāt ilāla** (**anātū ilāla**) (I will examine it)  
**isīt ilāla** (**isītū ilāla**) (She will examine it)  
**arbāt utāla** (**arbātū utāla**) (The elephant runs)

When an object comes between the subject and the verb the suffix is generally used:

**intalāti ságale féḍa** (The girl wants food)

The suffix is usually omitted, however, when the object is a monosyllabic pronoun:

**intalā si féḍa** (The girl wants you)

When an adjective is used in agreement with the subject, both noun and adjective are put into the objective form and the emphatic suffix goes onto the adjective:

**ūle qērtū tanát(i) háma<sup>22</sup>** (This long stick is bad)

The same ruling also applies to an emphatic noun clause, e.g.

Ordinary:

**intalti<sup>23</sup> kale arma ḡufte ammale si bárbāddi** (The girl who came here yesterday is looking for you again)

Emphatic:

**intala<sup>23</sup> kale arma ḡuftēti<sup>24</sup> ammale si bárbāda** (The girl who came here yesterday is looking for you again)

It should be noted that this construction precludes the use of any prefix to the verb, so that it cannot be used with the Perfect tense prefix **ya-**. Should it be desired to emphasize the subject to a verb in the Perfect tense, the prefix must be omitted. It will then coincide with the Past tense, and in translating back, the context must show which way it should be translated, e.g. **arbā ḥabse** might mean either "The elephant broke it" or "The elephant has broken it".

It should be noted that a combination of

<sup>21</sup> **ana** is the strong form of the objective 1st p. s. personal pronoun and is in itself mildly emphatic. This is the form that always stands alone, where **na** cannot; e.g. **sūni ēnū?** (Who is that?), **āna** (I, me). It is used with prepositions alone, **ana mále** (without me).

<sup>22</sup> Note that whilst the ordinary adjectives agree in gender with the subject, the predicative adjective takes the masculine form.

<sup>23</sup> The relative **ta** (who) is understood.

<sup>24</sup> The **i** here must not be elided but stressed.



**-uma** and **-ti** (or **-tū**) is common to make a stronger emphatic.

**isumátí wolāle** (*He (or she) only has done wrong*)

Where the two are combined in a noun and adjective, the two rulings, 3 (b) and 4 above, must be observed, e.g. **gúrbuma kanátí wān kana tolce** (*This boy only has done this thing*).

(b) *With the Verb*

(i) *In the Indicative Past and Present/Future*

The normal way to connect together two or more verbs in co-ordinate clauses in a sentence (where in English an "and" would be used) is to put *all but the last verb into the form of the past tense*, irrespective of whether the intention of the verb is past, present or future, e.g.

**ani dēmē ilāle** (I went and saw)

**ani dēmē ilāla** (I will go and see)

**ani dēmē isa bārbādē isát(i) hīma**  
(I will go and look for him and tell him).

In order to give more stress to these independent actions, to emphasize the purposefulness of the action and to make them more graphic, the suffix **-ti** can be added to all but the last verb: **ani dēmēti isa bārbādēti isát(i) hīma**.

(ii) *In the Subjunctive*

**haga** (as long as, as much as) is used with the Subjunctive in the appropriate person and the suffix **-ti** to denote "until", "up to the time that" in the future.

**haga ani ɖuftûti** (until I come)

**haga isini ɖuftûti** (until she come(s))

5. *The Persuasive Particle -yi*

This is a minor particle about which very little need be said. It is used mainly with the Imperative and softens considerably what would otherwise be a plain command. Its chief use is when coaxing a child to do something or, in the Indicative, tempering what might be an unpalatable statement, e.g.

**bēniyi** ( - - -); **úle tánte nātini**

**kóti** (Go; and bring your stick to me)

**insodātíniyi** ( - - - - -); **sareni dansa** (Don't be afraid now; the dog is nice)

**índēm̄tāyi** ( - - - -); **wóma si intól-cani** (You will go, now; they will do nothing to you)

6. *The Indefinite Particle -fa* (about)

(a) *With Nouns, etc.*

When the nature or quantity of something is indefinite, or it is desired to leave it unspecified the particle **-fa** can be suffixed as follows:

**mukafá** (a tree or something)

**lamafá** (two or so)

**armafá** (somewhere about here)

(b) *With Verbs*

When it is desired to suggest some possible action without limiting it necessarily to the nature of the verb in question, **-fa** can be suffixed as follows:

**ini ínqarqārafá** (He will help or do something)

**sire arma illakisíni; ínhatanifá**  
(Don't leave the bed here; they (someone) will steal it or something (break it, etc.))

C. CONJUNCTIVE PARTICLES

These are:

**-f(i)** (and)

**-re?** (then?)

**-mō?** (or?)

1. *The Joining Particle -f(i)* (and)

This is used for joining together Nouns and Pronouns and Noun-phrases and Noun-clauses (see 4 (b) for joining Verbs).

(a) *Nouns*

(i) *Nouns only: Accusative*

**bísanīf(i) ságale nā kénni** (Give me water and food)

(ii) *Nouns with an Adjective: Accusative*

The suffix is attached to the adjective:

**bisani gurācāf(i)<sup>25</sup> sagalé nā kenni**  
(Give me plain water and food)

<sup>25</sup> **gurāca**, lit. "black", used of clear drinking water.

(iii) *Nouns only: Nominative*

Where two or more nouns are joined together to form the subject of a sentence, all but the last one go into the accusative case, e.g.

**fardâf(i) harrêf(i) gângêni árma**  
**'jirti**<sup>26</sup> (The horse, donkey and mule are here)

(iv) *Nouns with an Adjective: Nominative*

All but the last noun and adjective go into the accusative case, e.g.

**ságale tána*f*(i) bísani kûni nā ingâ-**  
**yani**<sup>27</sup> (This food and water are insufficient for me)

(b) *Pronouns*

**anâf(i)**<sup>28</sup> **ati**<sup>29</sup> **wólini dêmna** (You and I will go together)

**ísâf(i) ísini wolimfédani** (He and she do not like each other)

2. The "Contingent" Particle in questions: **-re?** (then?)(a) *With the Interrogative Pronoun: māl*i*<sup>30</sup> (what?), **kam*i***? (which?)*

**mālré?** } (What is it then? What  
**māre?** } about it then?)

**kāmíré?** (m), **tāmíré?** (f) (Which is it then?)

(b) *With Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives, etc.*

**nāmāré?** (Is it a man then?)

**kānāré?** ((Is it) this then?)

**gúddāré?** ((Is it) big then?)

(c) *With Interrogative Adverbs*

**hagámíré?** (How many then?)

**akámíré?** (How then?)

**yômiré?** (When then?)

**mêré?** (Where then?)

**mâré?** (abb. for **malífiré**) (Why then?)

These are often used in an elliptical way when the verb is not expressed.

(d) *With the Verb*(i) *In the Affirmative*

This is simple in use and needs little comment. It presupposes some circumstance that might influence one's action. Although it would be too strong to say that the answer necessarily expected is "no", the underlying thought is perhaps one of mild surprise that it could be affirmative, e.g.

**ati ímfêtāré?** (Do you want it then?—in the circumstances)

**ini indêmēré?** (Did he go then?—things being as they were)

**isini lâqúftēré?** (Has she come then?—in spite of things)

(ii) *In the Negative*

The answer expected here is definitely affirmative in reply to a negative question, e.g.

**ati ímfêtūrē?** (Do you not want it then?—after all)

**ini indêmnērē?**<sup>31</sup> (Did he not go then? Has he not gone then?—in spite of things)

3. The "Alternative" or "Contrasting" Particle **-mô?** (or?)

When alternative statements are made, "either . . . or", **-mô** is not used.<sup>32</sup> When, however, alternatives are put before anyone in the way of a question, **-mô?** (or?) is the correct conjunction to use.

(a) *With Nouns, etc.*

**-mô** can be suffixed to almost any part of speech, except that in nouns and pronouns it cannot be suffixed to the nominative case. Since the alternatives are usually stressed, the accusative case, denoting emphasis, is used (see 4), e.g.

**đírāmô náđēni?** (Is it a man or a woman?)

<sup>26</sup> Where the genders of the nouns differ, it is usual for the verb to follow the gender of the noun nearest to it. This does not apply to personal pronouns which take the appropriate plural verb.

<sup>27</sup> This is the plural verb that all "neuter" nouns take. Note that the stress on the stem (the syllable following the prefix **in-**) is the only indication in a 3rd p. pl. that the verb is negative.

<sup>28</sup> Note the strong form of the pronoun.

<sup>29</sup> The proper order of precedence in Boran is to put oneself first, the one to whom you are speaking next, and the one about whom you are speaking last.

<sup>30</sup> Often contracted to **mā**?

<sup>31</sup> This may be translated either as a negative past or as a negative perfect. As the prefix **in-** is essential to the negative formation, the prefix **lâ-** (indicating the perfect in the affirmative) cannot be used as well.

<sup>32</sup> The proper conjunction in that case would be **yókāni**, which does not come within the scope of this article.



**gúddāmô díqa?** (Is it big or little?—  
masc. thing)

**gúddōmô díqō?** (Is it big or little?—  
fem. & neuter)

or (Is it much or little?—adverb)

Frequently, the alternative is left unexpressed in order to leave a wider range of reply. For instance, a thing may be neither big nor little, in which case room must be left for a second alternative, e.g.

**gúddāmô?** (Is it big or what?)

(Each syllable is well stressed, with the main emphasis on the **-mō**).

Besides this elliptical form, questions are often expressed more fully:

**lāmāmô sádi fēta?** (Do you want two or three?)

**kálēmô árra qufte?** (Did you (she) come yesterday or today?)

With a subject:

**intalamô gurbá feḡa?** (Does the girl or the boy want it?)

Note that if the stress came on the first syllable of **gúrba** it becomes the object to the verb **feḡa**, with the meaning "Does he want the girl or the boy".

(b) *With the Verb*

**-mō** is usually used with the verb to contrast the affirmative and the negative, e.g.

**ati ímfētāmô ímfētū?** (Do you want it or don't you want it?)

**ati láargitēmô inárgine?** (Have you seen it or have you not seen it?)

As with the other parts of speech, the question may end with the **-mō**, leaving the alternative unexpressed, e.g.

**ímfētāmô?** (Do you want it, or . . .?)

**láargitēmô?** (Have you (Has she) seen it, or what?)

Sometimes the negative of the verb only is used, e.g.

**indēmnēmô** (Has he (etc.) not gone or what?)

#### PRESENT PARTICIPLE WITH **-tini**

Whilst a detailed examination of the uses of the Present Participle is outside the scope of this introductory article on particles, it might be worth while noticing here that **-tini** can be suffixed to the Indicative Past tense form of any person of the verb to form a Present Participle (as distinct from a Continuous Participle), e.g.

**ini utáltētini ūle tīya nā fūḡe** (Running, he fetched me my stick)

**intaltí utáltētini ūle tīya yōsū nā fūti** (The girl running will fetch my stick for me straight away)

## NOTES AND NEWS

## URBAN LOBOLO ATTITUDES

From:

PROFESSOR ABSOLOM VILAKAZI

Department of Anthropology and African Studies

Hartford Seminary Foundation

Hartford 5, Conn., U.S.A.

May I make a short comment on Mrs Brandel's reply to my "Query and Comment" on her "Urban Lobolo Attitudes" (*African Studies*, 18, 2, 1959).

1. I am afraid that Mrs Brandel's explanation of "Lobolo-as-such" as "Lobolo itself" is not very illuminating. Perhaps her second article will throw some light on this subject. I, for one, cannot conceive of "lobolo" outside of marriage. It exists only within the marriage context. She points out, of course, that in this she follows Dr M. D. W. Jeffreys. I hope this will not be taken as a discourtesy either to Dr Jeffreys or to Mrs Brandel on my part, but I cannot accept Dr Jeffreys's or anybody's "say-so" as a good and sufficient reason for accepting an idea or a concept. This is especially true in this case as Dr Jeffreys's article to which reference is made (*African Studies*, 10, 4, 1951), is, to say the least, most controversial. It is contrary, as Dr Jeffreys himself points out, to the research findings of reliable scholars in the field.

2. Paragraph two of her 3 and 2 (p. 81) shows that Mrs Brandel missed my point completely. I did not say that urbanization is a direct result of Christian teachings in Mission stations and the Mission schools. What I did say was that the cultural changes and attitudes "which Mrs Brandel naively attributes to urbanization are a direct result of Christian teachings in Mission stations and Mission schools which have been centres of westernization . . ." (pp. 81-82).

My whole point here is that anthropologists and sociologists working in Africa should not adopt uncritically the concept of urbanization or confuse it with westernization. Urbanization is the massing of the

people in cities and in the industries. To characterize people as Western on the basis of density of population or residence in city compounds is unsatisfactory. As Louis Wirth (*American Journal of Sociology*, 41, 1, July, 1938) says, it is only when "density is correlated with significant social characteristics" that it can furnish a basis for differentiating between urban and rural communities. I am also making the point that, among Africans, monogamous marriages, the emancipation of women, attitudes towards work, new explanations for disease—all can be shown to be more closely related to missionary teaching than to the mere fact of living in cities such as Johannesburg and Durban.

3. Mrs Brandel's Johannesburg Africans who are educated, westernized and urbanized, but who are "no longer Christian" do not disprove my point. Her phrase "no longer Christian" in fact, seems to concede my point. However, I suspect that if she did a little more research among these Africans she would find that perhaps 100% of them were raised in Christian homes by Christian parents; that they have been through Mission schools; that if they are married, they contracted Christian marriages (they could have done otherwise); or that if still unmarried, they will be married by Christian rites. She will probably find that those of them who are married and have children have had the children baptized, and, most likely, their wives are active in some Church. I write with some inside knowledge of this group. Their position *vis-à-vis* Christianity is somewhat similar to that of Western socialists who denounce capitalism and espouse socialism as an intellectually respectable position but who, in their private lives, cling tenaciously to their private property!

4. Finally, I would like to say that I await Mrs Brandel's second article with something akin to impatience, for she and I seem to have the same area of interests.



## HUMAN PROBLEMS IN BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA

It is not customary for *African Studies* to review journals, but the contents of the December, 1958, issue (No. XXIV) of *Human Problems*, which appears just as we go to press, make it appropriate for us to bring this number to the attention of our readers. It contains four articles, a few notes and some book reviews.

Two of the articles are based on exemplary field work. Gordon D. Gibson's study of Herero marriage, in addition to conveying the intrinsically interesting features of a double-descent system, continues the traditions of careful statistical analysis established by Barnes and Mitchell. Elizabeth Colson presents a detailed description of Plateau Tonga diet and supports it with a list of foods eaten at different times of the year.

In "The Study of Tribal Ethics", Professor A. Macbeath, author of *Experiments in Living*, gives some practical hints to field workers on the collection of data likely to be useful in the comparative study of ethics. Arthur Tuden, in his paper on Ila slavery, contributes to the descriptive literature on slavery in Africa and considers the function of slavery in a kinship society.

One of the Notes in this issue contains the welcome news that some of the earlier papers of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, which have been out of print for some time, are now available in "microfiche" form. They have been photographed on to 5" x 3" flat sheets which may be stored as file index cards and, with headings typed onto them, may serve as their own index. These sheets may be read with the aid of a pocket reader costing as little as £2 5s. Thus it has been possible to reproduce Godfrey Wilson's *An Essay in the Economics of Detribalization in Northern Rhodesia* (both parts) on a total of four cards at a cost of 10s.; and postage charges are very low (per part: surface, 3d.; U.K. airmail, 6d.; U.S.A. and elsewhere, airmail, 2s. 6d.).

## REGISTER OF CURRENT RESEARCH

The National Council for Social Research has recently issued another instalment of its *Register of Current Research in the Humanities*. It includes new research projects undertaken during 1957 and is based on returns received up to 30 November, 1957. In addition to listing university research projects in sixteen fields, it includes a short section on research being undertaken in the humanities by non-university institutions such as the National Institute for Personnel Research and the South African Institute of Race Relations. This cumulative register should be consulted by anyone interested in, or about to undertake, social research in South Africa.

## PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED FOR REVIEW

The Editorial Committee gratefully acknowledges receipt of the publications listed below, during the period 1 April, 1959, to 15 December, 1959. Reviews are published as circumstances permit, but no undertaking can be given that every book received will be reviewed in *African Studies*.

AMMOUN, Charles D.: *A Study of Discrimination in Education*. Dept of Public Information, United Nations, New York. 1957.

BARBOUR, Neville: *A Survey of North West Africa (The Maghrib)*. Oxford University Press for Royal Institute of International Affairs, London & Cape Town. 1959.

BARBU, Niculescu: *Colonial Planning*. Allen & Unwin, London. 1958.

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- JONES, A. M.: *Studies in African Music*. Volume I & II. Oxford University Press, London & Cape Town. 1959.
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- : *The Population of South-East Asia (including Ceylon and China: Taiwan) 1950-1980: Future Population Estimates by Sex and Age—Report III*. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, New York. 1958.
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- : *Annual Report of the King George V Memorial Museum for the year ended 31st December, 1958*. Government Printer, Dar-es-Salaam. 1959.
- : *Report of the King George V Memorial Museum for the period January 1st, 1959, to August 31st, 1959*. King George V Memorial Museum, Dar-es-Salaam. 1959.

## BOOK REVIEW

**A Planning Survey of the Southern Transvaal (The Pretoria - Witwatersrand - Vereeniging Area).** T. J. D. FAIR, with the assistance of other members of the N.R.D.C. STAFF. Government Printer for Natural Resources Development Council, Pretoria. 1956. viii + 82 pp., 26 black-and-white maps and diagrams, 2 multi-coloured maps, 6 aerial photographs, 33 tables. £2. 3s. 6d.

The diamond-shape of densely-packed population and industry comprising the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging area, which extends into the northern and north-western Orange Free State, is the most important economic region in South Africa. The exploitation in it of gold, coal, iron and uranium, possible only through the copious, if ultimately limited, water provided by the Vaal River, has led to the greatest single concentration of people and industry in the Union.

The development of the region has been haphazard and uncontrolled. Its dependence on gold mining has contributed to the uncertainty that has made bold, long-term planning difficult. Changes in the price of gold, unforeseen technological improvements in prospecting, ore-extraction and deep-level mining, and the recent rise in the importance of uranium—all these have made past predictions of the life of the gold mining industry inadequate, with the result that there have been differing estimates of the urgency of fostering industrial development as a means of taking up the slack caused by the gradual depletion of gold. The division of control of industry and related services among private enterprise, government, province and local authority has prevented a unified policy of develop-

ment. With the possible exception of railways and the provision of electricity and of water, the growth of the Southern Transvaal has been unplanned, and this has resulted in a number of serious problems which, if not tackled boldly and on a regional scale, will seriously handicap further development. These include the fragmentation of industrial areas with consequences such as the excessive cost of providing services and communications, the scattering of inter-linked industries, and the difficulty of siting housing areas for industrial workers. Traffic congestion is another result of unplanned development, the Witwatersrand at present representing a formidable barrier to through traffic between north and south.

This report brings together in concise and readable form, and presents with ingenuity and clarity, all the facts relevant to the regional planning of the Southern Transvaal, including the existing administrative machinery that might be set in motion for such a purpose. It gives attention not only to the industrial-commercial nucleus formed by the three metropolitan areas but also to the surrounding green belt of small holdings and farms that serve them. Dr Fair (now Senior Lecturer in Geography in the University of the Witwatersrand) and his colleagues are to be congratulated on an excellent and convenient synthesis of a wealth of important material. The success of their venture attests both to the remarkable co-operation that can be effected between government departments, local authorities and private enterprise by a body such as the N.R.D.C. and to the healthy concern with which the responsible bodies view the future of South Africa's economic heart.

M. G. MARWICK